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of

GREECE AND THE GREEKS.

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GREECE AND THE GREEKS;

OR,

A HISTORIC SKETCH OF ATTIC LIFE AND MANNERS.

BY

THE HON. THOMAS TALBOT.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE W. E. GLADSTONE,

PREMIER OF ENGLAND :

AUTHOR OF "HOMER" (A WORK OF RARE MERIT),

AN ACCOMPLISHED SCHOLAR,

A POWERFUL AND BRILLIANT ORATOR,

AND ENGLAND'S GREATEST LIVING STATESMAN,

This Work is Inscribed

WITH

PROFOUND SENTIMENTS OF ESTEEM AND ADMIRATION

BY THE AUTHOR.

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GREECE AND THE GREEKS.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

GREECE, of all parts of the earth, possesses a pre-eminence in the records of antiquity for the grandeur of its intellectual manifestations, and the splendour of its genius. It would appear to have been the chosen seat of the divinity of Mind; the spot of earth peculiarly set apart for the display of the intellectual powers of man; the region of thought; the nursery of human genius; the temple of the human mind. Whatever efforts may have been made by man in the intellectual sphere; whatever manifestations of genius may have occurred previous to the era of Grecian history, were, as far as we know, but the mere scintillations of a faint and distant meteor in comparison with the gorgeous light emitted from the mid-day sun of the Attic mind.

Undimmed by the lapse of more than twenty centuries, the effusions of the Greek intellect attract our admiration and illustrate our genius to-day. In the fields of Science, and throughout the realms of Art

and Imagination, we are directed and controlled by them. They are the rule of our judgments, the inspiration of our genius, the glory of our intellectual efforts. There must be something incomparably excellent in productions which have preserved the esteem and admiration of mankind, in every clime and every age, and throughout all the changing destinies of civilized nations, for a period of over two thousand years. And to whatever cycle of years the world may yet extend, this esteem and admiration will, doubtless, continue undiminished ; for the stamp of Nature, and the seal of imperishable truth, constitute the talismanic influence that shall preserve the immortality of those productions. The simplicity and sublimity of the poetic art enshrined in the pages of Homer ; the persuasive power, and captivating brilliancy, and irresistible vigour of high-souled oratory that breathes, and shines, and glows in the speeches of Demosthenes ; the natural ease, and grace, and beauty embodied in the historic narrative of Herodotus ; all these shall live eternal in the human mind ; and receive appreciation as long as the loftiest, purest, and most sublime genius shall have power to sway the admiration of mankind. Painting, Statuary, and Architecture ; Philosophy, Law and Religion ; sprang up and flourished side by side with the elder and nobler progeny of the Muses : and the Attic soil became redolent of the highest attributes and noblest creations of the human mind.

The name and story of Athens present an attraction to the educated and refined intellect as graceful as it is irresistible ; for here it may luxuriate over an

illimitable field of the fairest, and brightest, and loveliest productions of genius; and bathe and disport itself in the crystal waters of the most refined inspiration. The noble philosophy of Socrates; the golden wisdom of Solon;—the deep, and clear, and sparkling current of thought that winds along the plain of her history, from the fountain-head of poet, orator, philosopher, and warrior sage, offers the richest and most varied treat to the intellect and the imagination which it is possible for the labours of genius to produce.

To inquire into the origin, history, and institutions of a people like this, cannot fail to afford both pleasure and instruction, and to add to the charms inseparable from the investigation of ancient manners and customs, the inspiring interest springing from a renown the most dazzling that has ever encompassed a people.

CHAPTER II.

The first Colonization of Greece—Different Theories on this subject—Unsettled state of the first colonies—The land of Attica not subject to the changes of population which prevailed in other parts of Greece—Origin of the name Ionia.

AFTER the failure of the sons of Noah to carry out their design in the construction of the tower of Babel, in the land of Shinar, they, according to the Divine fiat, became wanderers over the face of the earth. To Japhet and his descendants were appropriated the lands lying westward of the scene where God had confounded the language of men as a just punishment for the audacity and impiety of their vain and ambitious enterprise. The sons of Japhet were four, viz. Gomer, Magog, Madai, and Javan; the last-named of whom we have good reason to believe was the first who colonized Greece; or at least that part of Greece which afterwards assumed the name of Attica, and in which stood the celebrated city of Athens. According to Josephus, in his "Antiquities," Ionia was the name by which the whole country afterwards called Greece was first known. "From Javan," he says, "sprang Ionia" (Ionia) "and all the Greeks." The prophet Daniel also refers to Greece under the name of Ionia in two several passages, as, first, "When

I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Jonia shall come : " and again, " He shall stir up all against the realm of Jonia." Strabo also bears his testimony to this genealogical view of the case : he says, " Attica was anciently called Jonia and Jas." And this writer further observes, in reference to the nomenclature used by Homer,— " When the poet " (that is, Homer) " says, ' There were the Bœotians and Jaones, ' he speaks of the Athenians." The poet Æschylus also uses the word Jaonians ; and his commentator, remarking upon this word, says, " It is to be understood that the Athenians are termed Jaones " (Javonians) " from one Jaon " (Javan) " who was their king."

There are some English writers, however, who say that Asia Minor was colonized before Greece ; and that it was after the necessities of a superabundant population had produced further emigration from that part of the world Greece became inhabited. This theory is certainly very plausible ; for it would seem reasonable that the emigration from Babylon would first spread itself along the western coasts of Asia, and then gradually extend itself along the eastern and southern borders of Greece, according to the increase of population, and the consequent demand for new abodes. But yet there is nothing absolutely conclusive in this theory ; for if, as we must suppose, the isles of the Gentiles, and the various countries of the earth which were assigned to the descendants of Noah, " every one according to his tongue," were known to them at the time of this dispersion over the face of the earth, we can have no hesitation in placing Javan and his sons in the im-

mediate possession of the land of Greece after their departure from the plains of Shinar. Be this, however, as it may, there is no doubt that a continual shifting of the inhabitants of Greece took place from the period of its earliest colonization,—some removing voluntarily in search of better and more commodious residences; and some being driven out from their abodes by stronger and more numerous parties of emigrants.

Thucydides favours this view of the case where he says that all Greece was not *βεβυίως οἰκουμένη*, "firmly inhabited."

In consequence of this unfixed and uncertain state of things, it is but just to suppose that there was little or no progress made either in the cultivation and improvement of the soil, or in the pursuit of trade and commerce. Each family deemed it sufficient to provide for their immediate wants, as they knew not how soon they might be compelled, by the presence of a superior force, to abandon their present holdings, and to seek new lands and other spheres of employment. Violent contentions were, however, often carried on in the more fertile parts of the country, between the old possessors of the soil and the wandering hordes who endeavoured to supplant them. Thessaly, Bœotia, and a part of the Peloponnesus were frequently the scenes of those fierce encounters; but the "Attic land," says Thucydides, "in consequence of its barrenness or absence of fertility was always occupied by the same men." The necessary result of this undisturbed occupation of the soil was a progressive increase of the population of Attica, and a

fixedness of abode which could not but be favourable to the cultivation and improvement of such arts as they had carried with them from the East at the period of their emigration. Accordingly in the lapse of time this part of Greece became populous to overflowing ; and, like an overcrowded bee-hive, it was compelled to send forth its swarms of emigration to seek employment and support in other lands. The direction of this new movement was eastward ; and that part of the coast of Asia Minor, called Jonia, became the possession of these colonies.

The name, Jonia, was probably given by the colonists to this new settlement in commemoration of their native country, which, as I have observed, was distinguished by the appellation of Jonia, or Jas. Or, it may have been so called, as so ne say, from Jon, the name, probably, of the leader of this emigration, who, according to Euripides, is thought to have been the " founder of Asia."

CHAPTER III.

The various names by which Greece was known—The origin of those names—Early intercourse between Greece and Egypt.

IN process of time the name of Jonia, as applied to Greece, was changed for that of Actæa, a derivative appellation from Actæon or Actæus, who was the first king of the country ; although according to some of the ancient writers this name was derived from the word Acta, which in the Greek, as well as in the Latin language, signifies *shore* : and the fact of Attica being washed on almost all sides by the sea affords sufficient ground for the application of the name. Plautus, referring to the city of Athens, calls it *Athenæ in Acta*, "Athens in Acta," for Athens in Attica. This name was also changed after a season ; and the country was successively designated by the names of Cecropia, Cranaæ, Atthis, and Attica ; and also Posodonia and Minerva. The name of Cecropia is derived from Cecrops, who having married the daughter of Actæus, its first king, was invested with the regal power. To him succeeded Cranaus, from whom it obtained the name of Cranaæ. From Atthis, the daughter of this Cranaus, it was called Atthis and Attica. It was called Posodonia from Neptune, and Minerva from Pallas ; these being names appropriated

to these imaginary deities respectively. The story of the contest which occurred between these divinities for the guardianship of Athens, though appertaining to the regions of fable, is not unworthy of recital. It is this :—A young olive-tree and a saline spring made their appearance suddenly, and at the same time, in the Acropolis, that is, the upper part of the city, during the reign of Cecrops. The king, deeming it a prognostic of some extraordinary future event, consulted the oracle of Apollo in order to discover the signification of the prodigy; and he received for answer, that the one signified Neptune and the other Minerva. He then resolved to adopt either divinity as the guardian of the city, according to the preponderance of public opinion; the men voting on the one side, and the women on the other. It would appear, by the decision arrived at, that the women at that time, in Athens—as they do, perhaps, at the present time in all our cities—outnumbered the men; for Minerva obtained the victory, and was installed as the presiding deity of Athens. Divesting this story, however, of all mysticism and superstition, the simple meaning of it is this, according to the opinion of Plutarch :—The ancient kings, being anxious to turn the attention of their subjects from seafaring and commercial pursuits to the cultivation of the soil and the business of husbandry, had recourse to the marvellous and superstitious in order the more effectually to impress upon their feelings and actions the spirit which guided their own policy. Neptune in this story represents the sea and the pursuits incident to it; and Minerva is put for the arts and the more

ingenious occupations of life ; for, according to Ovid, she is "*Mille Dea operum*," the goddess of a thousand trades. Following the authority of Justin, we should attribute to Amphictyon this consecration of Athens to the goddess Minerva ; though Herodotus and other writers have it that it was in the time of King Erectheus the name of Athens was given to this city. Of this Erectheus we are told that, in a time of general famine all over the then known world, with the exception of Egypt, he brought corn from this latter country to Athens. He was also the founder of the Eleusinian mysteries. There appears to have been an intimate connexion between Athens and Egypt from the earliest times ; for we find that the *Queen of Greece*, as Athens was wont to be called in early days, was supplied with some of her kings by Egypt. Besides Erectheus, there was Cecrops, who came there with a colony ; and Menestheus, whose father was an Egyptian.

According to the evidence of Diodorus Siculus, it was a received opinion in his time, and before it, that Athens was colonized by Egyptians ; the district of Sais, in Egypt, having been considered as the fountain head of the Grecian colony. This opinion assumes a plausible aspect from the fact that Sais, in the Egyptian tongue, signifies the same as Athenæ in the Greek ; and also that the Saitæ, or people of Sais, and the Athenians, had several customs which were common to both. This, however, must be regarded as one of those ingenious conjectures which are produced by the accidental similarities which are sometimes found between the names of places and the customs and observances of people otherwise dis-

similar. That some of the customs and ceremonies of the Egyptians were imported into Athens by those who arrived there from Egypt there can be no rational doubt; particularly with regard to those distinguished and influential persons who secured the regal power in themselves or their descendants. But further than this, there is no strong reason to believe that Egypt had anything to do with giving a name to the city, or with establishing and directing that intellectual and high moral tone in the constitution and habits of the people, from which the name Athenæ, or Athens, is derived. As I have before observed, Athenæ was a name by which the goddess Minerva, or Pallas, was sometimes designated, the word *thena*, in the Chaldaic language, signifying to *study*, or *learn*. This goddess being, therefore, the patroness of learning and the presiding genius of the Arts and Sciences, she was adopted as the guardian of Athens from the time that its inhabitants devoted themselves to the cultivation of literature and to the study of the Arts and of civil government. Well did this celebrated city maintain the prestige of its proud name; for it became the mart of literature in the middle ages of heathenism; and the fountain whence the Arts and the refined pursuits of intellectual and moral life drew their inexhaustible supply. It was, to use the language of Isodorus, the "shop of letters."

CHAPTER IV.

Geographical position of Greece—The Athenians and Argives contend for the palm of antiquity—First establishment of the city of Athens—Its growth and extent.

THE geographical situation of Greece is somewhat central with regard to the Old World. Aristotle says it is placed in the midst of the whole earth ; in reference no doubt to what was in his time considered the "*whole earth*." In the midst of Greece stands Attica, nearly the centre of which is occupied by Athens. It stands upon a high rock or eminence, on the summit of which rises the Cecropia or citadel, so called from Cecrops, one of its earliest rulers. This Cecropia was anciently designated *the city*, by way of pre-eminence, and to intimate that it was the first and greatest city of the world. On this score of antiquity the Athenians and Argives held perpetual contentions.

From the word *ἄστυ*, which signifies city, the Athenians called themselves *ἄστοί*, the citizens, to signify their superiority over all other people. The name *ἄστυ* was, according to Pausanius, changed in his time to that of *πόλις*, which is another name for city ; and hence the name *Acropolis*, or high city, was applied to the citadel on the summit of the hill.

This is, however, sometimes interpreted *arx* or castle, a species of structure which was always held sacred to Minerva ; which circumstance explains the allusion of Catullus when he says, "*Diva retinens in summis urbibus arces*," "the goddess who keeps the towers of cities." Little more than two centuries ago this tower or citadel was standing in all its pristine strength ; and, according to the testimony of a witness who vouches for the fact, contained a garrison of no less than 700,000 Janissaries. Upon the top of this tower stood crescents or semi-lunar representations, richly gilt, according to the custom of the Ishmaelites, who paid especial reverence to the moon. Of these lunettes or half-moons Favolius thus poetizes,—I give my own version of the Latin distich :

" With gilded moons this tower aspiring high,
Strikes the far clouds that wander o'er the sky."

It is asserted, on the authority of an eye-witness, that there grew on the side of the hill on which the Acropolis stood, a kind of herb, from which gleamed at a great distance a brilliant and sparkling light during the hours of night ; but upon approaching it there was nothing seen except the flower itself. Around the Acropolis or citadel ran a strong wall, which was partly erected by the Tuscan brothers who are said to have wandered from their own country, and settled down beneath the protecting shadow of this stronghold. Their names were Agrolas and Hyperbius ; but they went by the cognomen of Pelargoi, or Storks, "on account of their wandering," as Strabo interprets the term. These brothers are also said to

have been the first who built brick houses at Athens, the people before their time having lived in caves, or recesses scooped out on the sides of the hill. The part of the encompassing wall erected by the strangers was called after their name, the *Pelargicum*.

It was afterwards continued and completed by Cimon, the son of Miltiades. It had but one gate in its entire round, upon which Pericles expended an extravagant amount of treasure in ornamenting it with the *Propylæum*, or Porch. From this lavish and indefensible expenditure of the public treasure originated a war between the Athenians and their neighbours, the Lacedemonians. It occurred in this way : Pericles, feeling puzzled how to render to the people a satisfactory account of the expenditure incurred by this work, felt sorely troubled ; and having been asked the cause of his disquietude by his nephew Alcibiades, he answered that it arose from the difficulty which he found in giving up his accounts to the people. The nephew then advised him to consider how he might not give them at all. In accordance with this counsel he prepared a pretext to enter into hostilities with his neighbours the Lacedemonians, and thereby escaped the necessity of submitting his accounts to a public audit. I do not know whether in the present age, and with all the advantages of our superior civilization, and Christian morality, there may not be found statesmen and public officers who would involve the people in a war, with a similar view of escaping the public odium and castigation which their maladministration of public affairs and of the public funds demanded at

the hands of an outraged and indignant people. Be that, however, as it may, we have in the pages of history a very imposing example of the practice. Within the precincts of the Acropolis it was not permitted that a dog or a goat should enter; the latter, lest an olive, which it is said had first sprung up there, might receive damage; the former, for some indefinable reason. The circumference of the Upper City, or Acropolis, was three-score stadia, that is, seven miles and a half, or about one-fourth the circumference of the city of London, allowing that to be thirty miles, which I suppose to be about its circuit. Such then was the extent of the celebrated city of Athens. But to this was added, in the course of time, a number of houses below the hill, and extending to the seashore, which formed a town in themselves, and were called the *Lower City*; the two parts forming one body or corporation, and thus distinguished by the names of τὸ ἄνω, and τὸ κάτω, or the Upper and Lower City; and embracing a circuit of two hundred stadia, or twenty-five miles. We are informed that the land lying between the Upper City and the Pyræus or harbour, which was about five miles distant, was so soft and marshy that the walls connecting the two foundered in several parts; and that Cimon, the son of Miltiades, to whom I have already alluded, reconstructed them by laying a foundation of stones of great weight, and cementing the work with lime; which had the effect of making the earth so solid that it gave way no more. The work, as history informs us, was undertaken and completed by this public benefactor at his own expense. And

as an example of the ingratitude which characterized the manners of the time, we learn that after conferring this, as well as various other benefits, upon his fellow-citizens, he received at their hands the reward of banishment and exile. Such black ingratitude as this, it is to be presumed, forms no part of the moral or political code which guides the actions of men at the present day. Perhaps not; yet strange things do sometimes happen under the auspices of the enlightened governments of the present age of exuberant civilization. The walls connecting Athens with the Piræus were in height about forty cubits; and they are spoken of by Livy as being among the "*multa visenda*," the many sights, at Athens. In those walls there were, of course, several gates. According to one authority, they were ten in number; but we find mention in the classic writers of more. There was the gate called Dipylon or Thriasia, which was esteemed the fairest of all, and was placed in the front of the city; and was more massive and wider than the rest;—the name Dipylon indicates its superior size, the term signifying twofold, as it was twice the size of the other gates. The next was the Piraicæ, near the temple of Chalcodon. "Here," says Plutarch, "were buried some of those who had died in battle with the Amazons in the time of King Theseus. Then there was the gate called Hippades, where, we are told, were deposited the remains of Hyperides, the celebrated orator, in the mausoleum of his fathers. It is recorded of this distinguished person that, Antipater having put him to the torture in order to compel him to divulge the secrets of his country, he bit off his

tongue, to prevent the possibility of a single revelation escaping him. There were also *Hierai*, or Sacred Gates ; and the gates *Ægeus* ; and the gate *Melitides*. Near this last-mentioned gate was buried Thucydides, the immortal historian of the Peloponnesian war. This benefactor of his country became a victim to the strange infatuation of ingratitude which we find exercising so fatal an influence over the thoughts and actions of the ancient Greeks ; for he was banished the country ; and after his return from exile was treacherously murdered. Another gate was designated the *Ceramica*, and near this were buried many of those Lacedemonians who had perished in the war waged by Thrasybulus against the thirty tyrants. The *Diocharai* and the *Acharnikai* were the names of two other gates. The latter is supposed to have been so called from the town of Acharna, towards which it looked. For it may be observed that the ancients named their gates from the towns, or villages, or remarkable places near, or opposite to them : as we find the Romans, for instance, calling one of their gates the *Collatine* gate, from Collatia, the name of a bridge in its vicinity. The remaining gates of which we find mention in the classic authors were the *Diomæa* and the *Thraciæ* ; the former deriving its name from the Diomians, a people of Athens not far from this gate ; and the other probably from Thracia, or Thrace, in the direction of which it may have looked. There is also the *Pæcile* gate, standing near the gallery of paintings, from which it derives its name. Such, then, were the position, extent, and arrangement of that once celebrated city, whose fame

and glory have encompassed the world, and extended through revolving and eventful ages up to the present time ; and will likely continue until Time's glass is broken, and the world is no more. Such, then, was the commencement of the Queen city of Greece ; the emporium of learning, the Nurse of the Muses ; of that city of perpetual sunshine, whose lofty citadel looks down on the blue laughing waters of the Mediterranean, and up amid the clear bright azure of a cloudless sky. Such was Athens,—the “famous,”—the “most renowned,”—the “happy,”—“sacred Athens,” as Sophocles loves to call her.

CHAPTER V.

Division of the Athenians into two classes—their Characteristics.

THE Athenians in early times were divided into two classes, a distinction based not upon property or calling, but upon character and morals. They were thus called *Athenaioi*, and *Attikoi*; that is, Athenians, and Attics; the former being a designation of honour, and the latter of opprobrium. I take it that this distinction was somewhat analogous to that which we of the present day make between the virtuous and the immoral, the industrious and the idle, the honest and the knavish; in short, between good and bad citizens: and that it had no further reference than as it was calculated to hold forth the lives of good men as the true objects of imitation, and those of bad men as deserving of reprobation and abhorrence. As an exemplification of the practical effects of this *moral* distinction, as I may term it, the Athenians, on one occasion, with the view of appeasing the anger of Neptune at the time of an inundation of the city, inflicted as a punishment upon the women, that they should thereafter be called *Attikoi*, instead of *Athenaioi*, or Attics, instead of Athenians; the opprobrium of which designation being deemed a

most severe punishment. The anger of Neptune in causing the inundation was supposed to have been produced by his defeat in the contest with Minerva for the guardianship of the city; and which defeat was effected through the votes of the women. The citizens who went by the name of Attikoi were characterized by such descriptive epithets as these,—“inquisitive babblers;” “deceitful persons;” “calumniators;” “gossiping observers of the lives of strangers;” and so on. It would seem that in the times of which I speak, as well as in our own, the habit of frequenting certain public places, and shops, such as barber’s shops, for the purpose of gossiping and killing time, was quite prevalent; for we find several allusions to this practice, as well as strictures on its vicious and evil tendency, in the ancient writers. Aristophanes makes this reference to it: “They sat in barbers’ shops, and talked a great deal of how rich such an one had suddenly become.” Another writer says: “Sitting in a surgeon’s shop—scandalous men—they thirst to speak ill by all means.” Such were those whom we find described as *περίεργοι ταῖς λαλιαῖς*, over-curious babblers. The *ὑπουλοὶ*, or deceitful persons, were those *Italianated* people, as an English writer phrases it, who could smile while they cut the throats of their victims; men who, according to the character given of them by Theophrastus, could display affability to those whom they regarded as their enemies, and disguise the hatred of the heart in the praises of the tongue; who could with seeming sincerity and affection clasp within their arms the persons whose life-blood they meant

to shed. They were like the painted sepulchre, fair without, but all rottenness within.

The *Sukophantodeis*, or calumniators, were a description of persons very much detested by the Athenians. Our English term, sycophant, would seem to have been derived from this Greek term, although the meaning of the Greek word does not exactly correspond with that which we understand by the word *sycophant*. The *Sukophantodeis* were those who were given to false accusations; while our term, sycophant, applies only to those who debase themselves by following and flattering the great and powerful from motives of self-interest. At the same time it may be said to involve the idea of misrepresentation, and falsehood; and this without any overstraining of its meaning: for the man who, from considerations of selfishness, degrades himself by trotting at the heels of men in power, and pandering to their follies, or predilections, never hesitates to distort facts, and to make such a representation of men and their actions as he may deem most in accordance with the prepossessions and gratifying to the views and the vanity of his patrons.

The commentator on Aristophanes, in his explanation of the meaning of the word *Sukophantodeis*, says that according to a public ordinance it was forbidden to carry figs out of Athens; but that notwithstanding this prohibition they used sometimes to be carried out of the city. It was therefore found necessary to station certain persons at the gates for the purpose of watching and discovering those who violated the law, that they might be brought to justice. The

persons so stationed (whom we might call constables, or city police) were by the Athenians regarded as rogues, from the cunning and deception, and prying disposition which must necessarily form the character of persons so employed: and they were named *Sukophantodeis* from their occupation; the literal meaning of the word being *discoverer of figs*. It came afterwards, however, to be applied to every cunning and base schemer who obtained his living by becoming a spy upon the actions of others, and promoting evil designs against them; to every unprincipled person, in short, who meddled in the affairs of others; and who availed themselves of every occasion by which they might profit through their deception and treachery, and by the misfortunes of those whom they had deluded and betrayed. Such was the character, and such were the designs of the *Sukophantodeis*, or Calumniators of Athens, a race held in deserved abhorrence by the virtuous and honourable portion of the citizens. There are at the present day, perhaps, some worthy representatives of this marked tribe, some lineal descendants of the *Figgists*, who ply their honourable calling with no less zeal and industry than their progenitors of glorious memory. With these, however, we have nothing to do here. It is recorded of Aristotle that having been once asked what he thought of Athens, he replied that it was *pankale*, that is, all-beautiful; but added, reciting a verse from Homer's *Odyssey*, that pears grew ripe after pears, and figs after figs: by which he meant the succession of sycophants, or calumniators, who flourished there. This suggested to Isocrates, the

orator, the observation, that Athens was the best place to sojourn in, but the worst to inhabit; its sycophants and nimble-tongued orators rendering a permanent residence there both disagreeable and unsafe. The Athenians, however, were distinguished for their hospitality to strangers; and always acted on the principle of the maxim which was, likely, an established law with them, that "foreigners should receive no wrong." The Attikoi, or tribes of "babblers," "deceivers," and "calumniators," on the contrary, were ever ready to offer annoyance to strangers, and always on the alert to take them at a disadvantage. The leading moral characteristics of the Athenians were, magnanimity, generosity, and fidelity. They were bold of spirit, honest, and simple-minded in their dealings; and truthful in their friendships. From this high moral elevation, however, they in time degenerated, and became remarkable for what Polybius terms *ἀνωμαλίαν φύσεως*, an irregularity of disposition. Their early magnanimity degenerated into haughtiness of spirit; and nothing remained to them of their once lofty and generous nature save this proud spirit, which bore them along amid accumulating difficulties and pressing dangers; and which bade defiance to every ill that threatened them. Their former singleness and simplicity of character abandoned them; and they became, as Plutarch says, "rashly angry, quickly moved to pity, hasty in the formation of opinion, and impatient of advice and information. "They are ready," he continues, "to give assistance to base and abject peasants; they are taken with childish and ridiculous toys; they

rejoice in their own praises ; they are unmoved with scurrility ; they are fearful, even terrible to their governors ; but they are humane to their enemies." This was a wretched state of moral and political feeling for a people, once distinguished for high-souled bearing and lofty independence of mind and character, to have fallen into. "How much," says Valerius Maximus, "do they deserve to be blamed, who, though they had just laws, yet had most wicked dispositions ; and who preferred the suggestions of their unbridled desires to the guidance of their statutes."

The downward tendency of the Athenians from the lofty pinnacle of virtue and moral grandeur seems to have been decided and rapid ; for in addition to their other deflections from the right line of dignified conduct and true self-respect, they became remarkable for impudence, insincerity, and perfidy ; and Ἀττικὸς βλέπος, an Athenian look, and *fides Attica*, Attic faith, were proverbial terms applied to them both by their own and the Roman writers. The influence of fear, and the apprehension of injury from hostile powers, were often checks to the exercise of their irregular and perfidious conduct : but of their violation of leagues, of their forming combinations with other people against their own allies and confederates, and of their shameful disregard of the laws of arms, history speaks in a voice not to be mistaken. Their spirit of revenge, their implacable animosities, their burning and relentless hatred of all foreigners, or *barbarians*, as they called them,—a hatred engendered by their hostility to the Persians ; all this

fierce and ungovernable feeling stamped them as a people that were forging their own ruin, and hastening its consummation.

Their treatment of foreigners who came amongst them was the same as of those among themselves who had committed murder, for they prohibited them from attending the sacrifices. Their history is surely a warning to all nations. From the most elevated position of moral and intellectual greatness, from the most brilliant prestige; from virtue the most exalted, and a destiny the most splendid, they rolled down by the pressure of their vices into the lowest and most abject condition to which any people could be reduced. Their inordinate self-sufficiency; their unbridled vanity; their disregard of truth and honour; their contempt of the pretensions of other nations and peoples; their violation of trust, and of the laws of justice and of honour; their indulgence in the worst passions, of anger, hatred, and revenge:—all this sapped the foundations of their moral and political greatness; obscured the lustre of their genius; destroyed their national prestige; and precipitated their ruin.

CHAPTER VI.

Other divisions of the Athenians into classes—Similarity between the Athenians and Egyptians in respect of the classification of the people.

THE division of the Athenian people, on the basis of property and grade, was into two classes, *eupatridai*, and *agroikoi*, that is, patricians and plebeians; or peers and peasants, as in France; or nobility and commonalty, as in England. There was a third class called *geomoroi*, or landed proprietors; but as these did not differ from the peasantry in blood or descent, they held no distinct rank as a class, but were amalgamated with them in the general division. The *eupatridai* were the descendants of those heroic men who had distinguished themselves in the service of their country by daring exploits and feats of valour, and whose posterity were ever afterwards held in the highest honour. They were similar in grade and position to what in England and the various countries of Europe are called nobles, or men of high birth. The *geomoroi*, or landed proprietors, were somewhat analogous to what are called yeomen in England; but they were the proprietors of the soil which they cultivated; and in this respect may generally be regarded as resembling the same

class in the republic of America, or in the British North American provinces, and other provinces of England, and also in France and Belgium. The *demigouroi*, or handicraftsmen, were included in the ranks of the *agroikoi*, or peasants;—these were tent-makers, shoemakers, carpenters, masons, and so on. In the time of Solon, however, another classification of the people took place under the direction of that celebrated lawgiver, which was founded on principles altogether different from those to which I have referred above. The nature and origin of this new classification we learn from the Greek writers to be as follows:—The *diacrii*, or people who inhabited the upper part of the city; and the *pediæi*, who lived in the plain, or middle of the city, between the Acropolis and the sea; and the *paralii*, who dwelt along the sea-shore; disagreed among themselves as to the form of government that would be best adapted to promote the general interests, and to consolidate the power and resources of the State. The *diacrii*, or dwellers on the hill, were for a democracy; the *pediæi*, or inhabitants of the plain, preferred an oligarchy; while the *paralii*, or those who lived on the sea-coast, leant to neither side, but remained suspended between the two contending parties. Wishing, however, that the dispute should be brought to a peaceable termination, they all agreed to refer the matter to Solon, and to abide by his decision. Accordingly, this wise legislator proceeded to the accomplishment of the task assigned him with his usual prudence, and that clear insight into the nature and disposition of mankind for which

he has been so famed. He did not adopt the views of either side, but struck in between them, leaning, however, to the democratic principle. He neither limited the power of the State to the patricians nor plebeians; but adopted an arrangement by which these two great classes might each possess a share in it, and thus conduct the government between them. His plan was this:—he divided the whole people into four classes; three of which were privileged to hold office in the Commonwealth. The fourth, which was composed of persons who lived in a condition of servility, were excluded from all power and office. The names and qualifications of the classes comprising this new division were, first—the *Pentacosimedimnoi*, who were the possessors of five hundred measures of dry, and the same of wet goods:—this of course indicated the extent of their property in the soil. Secondly, the *Equites*, or horsemen; they were those who were able to keep a horse, and whose property amounted to three hundred measures of wet, and the same of dry goods. These were also known by the name of *ἱππότες τελοῦντες*, or knights, as we say. Thirdly, the *Zengites*, who were such as could make up three hundred measures in all, wet and dry. Fourthly, the *Thetai*; these were the persons engaged in servile occupations, and who were permitted no power in the government. It is worthy of remark that this division of the Athenians was somewhat analogous to that which prevailed among the Egyptians. The first rank in this classification of Solon's, which embraced the *eupatridæ*, or patricians, the class who especially cultivated letters, and from whom the priesthood

were chosen in Athens, is analogous to the Egyptian priests. And the class of *Equites*, or knights, which included the *geomoroi*, or owners of land, corresponds with the class of Egyptian knights, who had lands assigned them on the condition of their supplying men and arms whenever the necessities of war called them into the field. Then there were the Egyptian labourers, or hired men, who resembled the Athenian *thetai*, or servants. That this resemblance or identity, as we may call it, should have existed with respect to the classification of the people of both these countries, is not at all a matter of surprise, when we remember the intimate connexion which existed between them from the earliest times; a connexion which consisted in Egypt's supplying Athens from time to time with kings, as well as colonies; and when we further remember that Solon, the architect of this new classification, had travelled into Egypt, as well as other countries, and brought home with him such knowledge of laws and government as he deemed applicable to his own country and conducive to its welfare and happiness.

CHAPTER VII.

Athens at the time of Cecrops—The people distinguished by Tribes—Astronomical basis of the Tribal division.

LOOKING back to the time of Cecrops, a period of more than fifteen centuries anterior to the Christian era, we find that the Athenians were then divided into four classes or tribes, known by the names, respectively, of *Cecropians*, *Autochthonians*, *Actæans*, and *Paralians*. These names, with the exception of the first, which was derived from Cecrops, had their derivation from the different localities occupied by the people, such as the upper city or hill, the plain, and the sea-coast. The Actæans and Paralians, it would appear to one, might be placed under the same head, inasmuch as the position or locality indicated by the terms is nearly the same; for *Actæa* means the sea-shore, or that part of the land upon which the waves beat; while *Paralia* signifies *near the sea*, and cannot admit of any wide difference in meaning from the former. In about half a century afterwards these names of tribes were changed, under King Cranaus, into Cranaians, Atthians, Mesogæans, and Diacrians, indicative chiefly of locality, as in the other instance. Erechthonius again called them after the gods Jupiter, Pallas, Neptune, and Vulcan. In the reign of Ion, another of their kings, they were

denominated, after his four sons, Geleontes, Ægicoreis, Argades, and Hopletes. Plutarch, however, says that they were so called from their modes of life; "the soldiers," he says, "being called Hopletes, the artificers Ergades, the husbandmen Geleontes, and the graziers Ægicoreis." Clisthenes, in his turn, changed these names, and divided the people into ten tribes, whom he called after certain heroes and demigods, all born in the land except Ajax, whom he included in the number as an ally to the others, as Herodotus expresses it. To these heroes were erected statues near the Council Chamber of the Senate. Their names, as given by Pausanius, were Hippothoon, Antiochus, Ajax, Telamonius, Leo, Erectheus, Ægeus, Ceneus, Acamas, Cecrops, and Pandion. To these were added two tribes more, called after Antigonus and Demetrius, in gratitude for services they had rendered the Athenians. But the names derived from these two latter worthies were afterwards changed for those of Attalis and Ptolemais, at the personal request of the Kings Attalus and Ptolemy. So that it appears there were twelve tribes in all. Eustathius says that the motive which suggested, in the first instance, the division of the people into four tribes was to assimilate them with the four quarters of the year. And then the further division of each tribe into three parts was intended to represent the twelve months of the year. Each part was again divided into thirty γένη, or families; which were intended to represent the days of the year,—three hundred and sixty. The celebrated riddle of Cleobulus refers to this symbolic distribution of the Athenians. "One father had twelve

sons ; and to each son were born thirty daughters ;—each daughter being parti-coloured, or black and white." This last allusion is to the day and night.

Here we have one of those frequent evidences to be met with in the classic authors, of the fantastic commingling, by the ancients, of astronomical science with their political and religious concerns. And we learn from this adaptation of the people, by quarters, and twelfths, and thirtieths, to the seasons, months, and days, that the year of the ancient Greeks consisted only of three hundred and sixty days. With respect to the government of these tribes, we find that each was presided over by a ruler who was called *Phulobasileus*, or king of the tribe. Each subdivision, or third part of a tribe, too, had its superintendent, who was called *Trittuarchos*, or ruler of the third part. We have seen that the second subdivision of the tribes consisted of thirty γένη, or families, to each *Trittus*, or third part. But the members of these families must not be regarded as of the same blood, or as having any affinity to each other beyond that which consists in being enrolled in the same body or fraternity. They enjoyed the same privileges, participated in the same immunities, and regarded each other with mutual interest and esteem. According to the regulations of Solon, which were made with the view of keeping alive their fraternal feelings and of affording constant vitality to their union, they held periodical festivals for the purpose of entertaining each other. The tribes also held their stated festivals ; as also did the colleges, or learned fraternities.

CHAPTER VIII.

Early mode of habitation in Greece—Regulation of towns and villages.

IN the first stages of Grecian colonization the country was inhabited, as may naturally be supposed to have been the case with respect to all other countries in their earlier historical periods, in the form of open towns or villages. These were called *κῶμαι* by the Greeks, a name supposed to be the origin of the word "comedy." In their celebration of the god, Apollo Nomius, whom they regarded as the tutelary deity of shepherds and neighbours, they went about from house to house, and village to village, singing and dancing. They had also rude altars erected to this god, upon which the rites of his worship were performed. Hence the word *κομᾶζειν*, to go about in procession, with the dance and the song, derives its origin from the word which stood for village. But the Athenians, we are informed, called their local groups of early inhabitants not villages, but peoples; which would seem to intimate a more exalted estimate of their position and character. Some of these were governed by kings, even before the time of Cecrops. About a dozen of these communities, or

towns, belong to each tribe ; so that there were about one hundred and forty-four in all ; though, according to some authorities, the number was one hundred and seventy-four. They were divided into greater and lesser towns, according to their size. Marathon, whose glory has been transmitted to us through so many ages, as the celebrated neighbourhood where Athenian patriotism and valour struck down the Persian hordes, was ranked among the lesser towns. I shall name here the villages or towns which belonged to the tribe called Cecropians:—*Aixōnē*, *Daidalidai*, *Epikidai*, *Xupētē*, *Pithos*, *Supalptos*, *Trinemeis*, *Athmonon* or *Athmonia*, *Alai*, *Aixonides*, and *Phlua*. There were some communities, however, which were not embraced within the tribes ; or, I should rather say, whose particular positions, as to tribe, have not been recorded by authors. Agra, Ceramicus, Atalanta, Munychia, Hymettus, Phoron, and Oropus, were some of these. There were about forty of them in all. This division of the people of Athens into tribes, and the arrangement of their towns and villages under the distinctive denomination of the different tribes, was greatly calculated to promote the security and welfare of the people. In the administration of the law, and in securing the ends of justice, it was of the greatest advantage ; for each person was known, not only by his name and calling, but also by his town or village, and the name of his tribe.

A description embracing these particulars was always set forth in their writs, as—*such* a man (his name being stated), the son of *such* an one, residing at *such* a place, and belonging to *such* a tribe.

All these villages and towns had temples for the worship of their gods ; for they had several deities besides Pallas Minerva ; although to her they paid especial honour, as being the adopted patroness and guardian of *the City*.

CHAPTER IX.

The forms of Government established among the Athenians—
Distinction between Oligarchy and Aristocracy—Democracy; its true nature and principles—Codrus, the last King of Athens—Pisistratus, and his successors.

I COME now to the forms of government which at different periods were established among the Athenians. The systems of government known to the ancients were of three kinds; namely, *Tyranny*, or kingly government, *Oligarchy*, and *Democracy*. Monarchy, or Tyranny as the government by a king was commonly designated among the ancients, was the possession and exercise of the executive power of the State by a single individual whose will constituted the law. This form of government answers to what in the present age we call a despotism. The system of rule denominated Oligarchy, or Aristocracy, consisted of the chief power being deposited in the hands of a number of men chosen from the ranks of the wise and good; such selection, however, being confined to the more wealthy orders of the State. A Democracy is, as the name implies, a government by the people. Of all the examples which men have had, whether in ancient or modern times, of the nature, capability, and efficiency of this form of government,

that which the great American Republic presents to their contemplation is perhaps the most perfect and illustrious. It is not easy to offer an opinion as to the secret springs which have hitherto produced the great results of the American system, and as to the probability of the uninterrupted progress of the principles upon which this system is founded ; but judging from the ordeals to which it has been subjected from its earliest establishment to the present hour—whether on the embattled plain, or in the intellectual arena of home statesmanship and foreign diplomacy—the conclusion at least would seem to be forced upon one, that it has in it a principle of vitality which promises a future no less prosperous and brilliant than has been its past. But, for all this, the clouds that overshadow it are charged with danger ; and it is not probable that a system of government which is, in its very nature, pregnant with the seeds of dissolution, can resist the stroke of destiny, or continue to flourish on a volcanic foundation. It is yet but in its noviciate ; and the fires that slumber within its bosom may explode at any time. But it is idle to speculate on a subject of this kind. Time and experience, while they unfold defects and dangers, point also to the means of supplying the one and repressing the other. It is on such occasions that the forms of government become changed.

The distinction between the Oligarchy and the Aristocracy, among the ancients, was this : whereas the latter placed the governing authority in the hands of a body of men distinguished for their wisdom, justice, and goodness ; the former selected, as

the depositary of power, only such men as possessed great wealth, without reference to their intellectual or moral qualifications. The nature of man, however, as well as the experience of ages, afford us an instructive lesson upon this head. The acquisition of uncontrolled authority by any body of men, unless indeed they are men of conspicuous virtue and wisdom, brings with it the principles of tyrannic rule. An aristocracy is a despotism in embryo. The first degenerate movement it evinces is in the direction of an Oligarchy—the virtue of the one becoming absorbed in the gold of the other. Where there is no interposing authority, the resistance of Wisdom to Wealth is but feeble. The Oligarchy by a natural gradation sinks into a Tyranny; that is, if the people do not anticipate its movement, and cut short its existence by the substitution of their own authority. This latter result is the more probable, since it is the more directly in the order of nature; for an oppressed people do not seek to place themselves on the elevation of freedom through the medium of a refined discrimination of the relative qualifications of their tyrants; but regarding only the source whence their evils flow, they aim at its extinction by the shortest method.

As the Aristocracy springs from the monarchical, or kingly system, and the Oligarchy from the Aristocracy, so the Democracy is the natural offspring of the Oligarchy—the ruling principle thus reverting in a cycle of government to the fountain whence all legitimate power proceeds. The Democracy or Republic, when rightly understood, contains every element of political harmony of which, in the nature of

things, the theory of government is susceptible. It is the will of the people put into active and systematic operation ; and the tendency of which is to place all citizens in the possession of the same privileges and immunities. It is what Terence styles "*equam libertatem*." The British Constitution is based upon the true democratic principle. I cannot help adverting here to what an old English writer says in treating upon this subject. It is to the effect that the multitude, from their proneness to insolence and wrong, and from the disposition which they manifest to trample upon the laws, and to make their caprices or passions the rule of their conduct and the basis of all civil government, diverge frequently, and as it were by instinct, from the democratic or republican system into what he terms an *Ochlocracy*, or the Rule of Rascality. When such occurs, however, the people never fail to become sufferers from their own headlong and reckless conduct ; the victims of their unrestrained passions and lawless conduct ; and to sink into such a helpless and forlorn condition as to yield their necks to the first tyrant who presents them with a yoke.

Each of these forms of government was in turn experienced by the Athenians. The monarchical form prevailed for the space of 487 years, and was terminated by the death of Codrus, the last King of Athens. The manner of his death appears as singular as it is suggestive of the pure and unselfish spirit of patriotism which distinguished the Greeks, as also the Romans, in the periods of their pre-eminence and glory. It occurred in this way : The Athenians were engaged in war with the Dorians ; and it was fore-

told by the oracle of Apollo that the triumph of the Dorians would be certain unless the Athenian king were killed. Codrus therefore resolved to offer his life as a sacrifice to his country's safety; and accordingly arraying himself in a servant's attire, in order to disguise his person, he threw himself into the midst of the enemy, and soon met his death. After this the Athenians no longer used the term "king" as applied to their chief ruler; and this out of reverence to the memory of Codrus. They changed their system of government by the establishment of Judges, whom they called Archons; whose authority was in no way inferior to that of a king, and whose term of power lasted during their lives. This form continued during the space of 315 years. Then succeeded the decennial modification of this system; according to which there was but *one* instead of *two* Archons; and the life-tenure was altered into a period of *ten* years. Of these there were seven; their united periods of office having spread over the space of seventy years: after which the tenure of office was limited to one year, in consequence of an abuse of power arising from the diminished responsibility inherent in authority extending over a long period of time without the corrective influence of popular control. These were called *annual* magistrates; and continued to govern Athens until the time of Pisistratus. This celebrated person seized the reins of government by violence, and maintained them during his life, which was a period of thirty years; and transmitted them to his sons, Hipparchus and Hippias. The manner in which this ambitious adventurer proceeded in the attainment of his object is worthy of a passing

notice. There grew up in Athens a sort of faction consisting of persons of servile occupations, and who were disqualified by law from filling any office in the State. This faction was, of course, odious to the various classes of citizens; who were vigilant in suppressing their pretensions and disorderly proceedings. Pisistratus, having an anxious eye to the accomplishment of his ambitious designs on the supreme power, and with this view wishing to enlist the body of citizens on his side, pretended that he had been assaulted by this detested faction; and that his life was in danger from their attempts, unless he received protection from the people. He rushed one day into the streets, having previously lacerated his body with lashes, and also cut the mules which drew his chariot; and appearing before the people, harangued them upon the violence which he represented had been offered to him; and entreated their assistance for the protection of his life. A band of chosen citizens was consequently assigned to him; and with these, who were armed with clubs, he put himself at once in possession of the citadel; and thus became the king, or tyrant of Athens. His son and successor, Hipparchus, was slain by Aristogiton and Harmodius; after which, according to the testimony of Herodotus, the Athenians still continued, for the space of four years, in a state of unmitigated slavery. At length the Lacedemonians came to their relief, and restored them to the condition of freemen. We have thus seen that the democratic, or republican system of government, became established among the Athenians after a lapse of 868 years from the time of Cecrops.

CHAPTER X.

Solon, the Founder of the Athenian Commonwealth—His mode of proceeding; the difficulties he encountered; and his final success.

SOLON, who was the founder of this new commonwealth, deserves special notice. He flourished about six centuries before our era; and was one of the most remarkable men of his own or of any other age. He was born of noble parents; his father is reported to have been a man of moderate fortune and authority, and a descendant of Codrus, the last King of Athens; and his mother to have been cousin-german to the mother of Pisistratus. His father, whose name was Execestides, had by his munificence and liberality greatly diminished his fortune; which caused Solon, in the spirit of self-reliance and honourable independence, to devote himself to the pursuits of commerce. This opened to him a career of foreign travel, by which he was enabled to gratify his desire for the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom. His love of intellectual acquisition was unbounded; so that even in his old age it had not forsaken him, as is evidenced by that remarkable expression of his, "I grow old in the pursuit of learning." He was not addicted to the love of wealth; but observed the

golden medium, which is alike remote from superfluities on the one hand, and sordid penury on the other ; and which is the peculiar sphere of human wisdom and happiness.

In one of his poetic effusions (for in his youth he was very much attached to the Muses, and composed verses with great facility and taste), he gives expression to the following sentiments, as rendered into English verse by the translators of "Plutarch's Lives :"—

"The man that boasts of golden stores,
Of grain that loads his bending floors,
Of fields with fresh'ning herbage green,
Where bounding steeds and herds are seen,
I call not happier than the swain
Whose limbs are sound, whose food is plain,
Whose joys a blooming wife endears,
Whose hours a smiling offspring cheers."

And again he expresses himself, on the subject of riches, in a more decided manner, in the following lines :—

"The flow of riches, though desired,
Life's real goods, if well acquired,
Unjustly let me never gain,
Lest vengeance follow in their train."

With respect to the poetic vein which was one of the most prominent mental characteristics of Solon, Plato says that if he had devoted his attention to the revision and correction of his poems, neither Homer, Hesiod, nor any other of the poets of antiquity would have excelled him, or acquired more fame in that department. He is said to have put his laws into verse in order that they might be the more easily remem-

bered and transmitted to posterity. From the general tenor of his life and writings, and the nature and spirit of his laws, it is manifest that he was a man of the most eminent virtue, and the kindest disposition. In this light, too, his fellow-citizens regarded him; and when social distress and impending ruin roused them to considerations and measures for their safety, to him alone they appealed, as to the arbiter of their destinies. As I have noticed in another place, the Athenians became separated into three distinct parties on the subject of the form of government which might be deemed the best calculated to meet the necessities of their peculiar position. This was a subject long debated amongst them, and to which they recurred again and again; the inhabitants of the upland and mountainous districts contending for a democracy, in opposition to the dwellers on the plain, whose views were in favour of an oligarchy, and of the dwellers on the sea-coast who were for a mixed form of government. These disputes became at length charged with the most explosive elements of discord, hatred, and disaffection, in consequence of the exactions of the wealthy classes, and the increasing distress and miseries of the poor. To such an extent had the derangement of society grown, and so reckless of consequences had the wealthy classes become, that the persons of the poor were made subjects of security to wealthy creditors; or, in other words, poor debtors became the property of their wealthy creditors, to be transferred by sale from hand to hand, according to the ordinary modes of speculative traffic.

Thus the Hectemorii, or Thetes, as these unhappy people were called, were not only taken from their lands, and reduced to the condition of abject slaves in the service of their creditors, but were even sold as such to foreign purchasers. The whole fabric of society became thus disjointed, and usury and slavery went hand in hand in facile conspiracy against the existence of the State. Parents sold their own children, and fled from the city in order to escape the grinding exactions of their oppressors. Justice, pity, humanity—all the virtues, and the gentle emotions which sway the human heart—seem to have abandoned the Athenians at this period of their history; and to have left them a prey to the dark brood of vice and wickedness; that their destruction, it would seem, might thereby be the more easily secured, and the more quickly precipitated. The natural consequence of such a state of things, however, is resistance, resolute, desperate resistance; and accordingly we find that a combination of the boldest and noblest spirits among the oppressed classes was eventually formed, and an open opposition declared against their oppressors.

A leader was to be chosen in order to direct this reformatory movement to a salutary conclusion; and Solon at once became the object of the popular choice. All parties concurred in this selection of a man who was equally remote from the spirit and practice of oppression which characterized the rich, and the feelings of discontent which, from their poverty and necessities, actuated the poor. He accordingly applied himself to the arrangement of the differences

which were dissolving the framework of society ; with a view to the restoration of public tranquillity, and to the establishment, upon a permanent basis, of the future peace and welfare of the commonwealth. He was chosen Archon by the unanimous consent of all parties ; and was invested with full authority to arbitrate the existing differences between the rich and poor ; and to frame such laws as he might deem best calculated to promote the general prosperity of the people. The leaders of the contending parties, moreover, were desirous that he should assume the position and title of King ; and earnestly urged him to the adoption of their views : but he resisted their entreaties, and declined the proffered honour ; observing that, "absolute monarchy is a fair field, but it has no outlet." Hence it is evident that the confidence of the whole people in the wisdom, justice, and integrity of this remarkable man was of the most unbounded character ; and it is gratifying to find that, from the whole tenor of his conduct as a legislator and reformer, they had no reason to charge themselves with precipitancy or a want of foresight in the judgment they had thus formed.

The ground of discontent on the part of the multitude was the unequal distribution of lands, and the pressure of the debts by which they were forced into slavery or exile. To these subjects, therefore, he turned his attention immediately upon his assumption of the administration. He commenced his labours with great care and circumspection : he made no sweeping radical changes in the existing system ; but advancing with great caution, and feeling his way

as he proceeded, he watched the development of his plan, step by step ; and took every necessary precaution to secure its full growth and maturity. To use his own expression, he made "force and right conspire ;" and enforced through fear what he could not effect through persuasion. He first promulgated a decree for the abolition of debts ; so that no creditor was at liberty for the future to seize upon the body of his debtor as security for the payment of his debt. Thus a large number of persons were restored to liberty, who had either been bound in slavery at home, or pined in exile in foreign countries. This step very naturally gave great satisfaction to the poor, while it created displeasure among the rich ; but to the joy on the one side, and the discontent on the other, he set a counterbalance by decreeing that the lands should remain untouched, contrary to the general expectation. By this second step he secured the approbation of the rich, but incurred the displeasure of the other class. There occurred upon the occasion of these changes one of those examples of unprincipled conduct, and reckless avarice, which reflect so much upon the honour and integrity of human nature, —one of those examples in human conduct which goes, in these our days, by the euphonious name of *dodge*. He mentioned to two or three of his friends his intention of not altering the tenure and disposition of the lands, while he had resolved upon the cancelling of the debts. These immediately took advantage of the information thus obtained, and borrowed large sums, with which they purchased estates. Thus upon the passing of the decree they were exempt from the

payment of the sums borrowed, while they held undisturbed possession of the lands they had purchased. This transaction brought considerable discredit and annoyance upon Solon ; but as soon as he explained the circumstances attending it, and showed that he had no participation in the fraud, he was restored to his former position in the public confidence. Those friends of his, however, went ever afterwards by the name of *Chrescopidæ*, or the *debt-cutters*.

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CHAPTER XI.

Abrogation of the laws of Draco—New classification of citizens, according to property—Wise laws enacted by Solon—Solon absents himself from his country ; and visits Egypt, Cyprus, and Lydia.

THE dissatisfaction arising from these preliminary arrangements having passed away, and Solon having by the universal consent assumed full jurisdiction in all matters connected with the public welfare, proceeded to abrogate the laws of Draco ; those laws of which Demades said, that they were written "not with ink, but with blood." These laws he repealed, all save those which related to murder. The great characteristic of those laws was their extreme severity ; for they assigned the same punishment to almost all offences, namely, the punishment of death. So that the man who was convicted of idleness, or of petty theft, was placed in the same category, as to punishment, with the murderer.

Draco's apology for this uniform severity in the punishment of offences, is as remarkable as his ideas of the nature of man and of human society were short-sighted : it is this, that "small offences deserved death ; and he could find no greater punishment for the most heinous." The next step taken by Solon,

in the promotion of his plan of government, was the classification of the citizens according to property. This classification was fourfold,—the *Pentacosimedimni*, or the possessors of a yearly income of 500 measures in wet and dry goods; the *Hippodamelountes*, whose lands produced 300 measures, and who, as the name imports, were of the equestrian order; the *Zeugitæ*, who had 200 measures; and the *Thetes*, or common people, who were disqualified from holding any office in the State; and whose only privilege was that of voting in the general assemblies of the people. This, however, turned out afterwards to be a privilege of great importance, inasmuch as almost all public causes were submitted to them for decision; and there lay an appeal to them in all matters which came under the cognisance of the magistrates. According to another of his enactments, it was competent for any citizen to take up the cause of another, and bring it before one of the public tribunals for adjudication: thus there was established a reciprocity of kindly feeling between the citizens,—a bond of mutual support, which tended to the union and consolidation of the whole community. It was in reference to this law that, upon being asked “what city was best modelled?” he answered, “*that*, where those who are not injured, are not less ready to prosecute and punish offenders than those who are.” His next proceeding was the re-establishment of the Council of the *Areopagus*; which he composed of such persons only as had borne the office of Archon. This was an improvement on the former constitution of that body, the composition of which

had been restricted to such persons as were most conspicuous for their wealth, influence, and integrity. So that by the alteration effected by Solon, the dignity, character, and reputation of this court was greatly raised. He then established the Council of four hundred, one hundred being chosen out of each of the four tribes or classes of the State; with the view of repressing, as Plutarch says, the growing insolence of the people consequent upon their being discharged from their debts. To this Council all matters were to be submitted previously to their being brought before the general Assembly of the people. Thus were the people checked on either hand; and a firm barrier interposed between the violence of faction, and that public repose which the unobstructed action of well-digested laws promotes and secures; for while, on the one side, the Council of four hundred had the right to express their views upon all public matters before any reference could be made to the opinion of the general Assembly; and the decision thus pronounced by the four great orders of the State afforded, in the generality of cases, a finality to the judgment of the people; the Council of Areopagus, on the other side, maintained by an absolute authority the supervision and guardianship of the laws.

One of the other laws promulgated by this great legislator was, that the man who remained neuter in a time of sedition or public disorder should be declared infamous. Thus he meant to inculcate the principle that every individual of the community was bound, by virtue of his citizenship, to regard the safety and welfare of the society of which he was a

member as an object of personal interest ; and that a dereliction of the duties which such a position implied was tantamount to a forfeiture of the public esteem, and consequently deserved to be punished by the brand of infamy. This law was clearly founded in Truth and Justice ; for no man can be indifferent to the public weal, or postpone the general interests of the State to his personal concerns without offering violence to the first and greatest and most vital principle of civil society. He, therefore, who watches the commotion of parties with a selfish neutrality, and hazards nothing in the common cause ; who awaits the declaration of victory in favour of one side or the other before he manifests his resolve ; and who then ranks himself under the banner of the triumphant party, is the worst enemy of truth, and a traitor to the well-being of society.

Solon was also the founder of that law which prohibited men from speaking ill of the dead ; and whence sprang the maxim *de mortuis nihil nisi bonum* ; a maxim, by the way, which does not appear to be altogether based on the wisest and most moral policy, although there are many considerations to recommend it.

On the subject of marriage some of his laws were very peculiar ; as they extended the boundaries of morality beyond the limits which Christian civilization, at least, assigns to them. The law of dowry, however, cannot but be regarded as of wise conception and beneficial tendency ; for it forbade dowries altogether, providing only that the bride should bring with her three suits of clothes, and no more, together with

some household stuff of trifling value, and an earthen pan called *phrogeteon*, in which barley was parched. This was to signify that she undertook the business of her husband's house ; and that she would contribute her labour and services in providing for the support of the household.

With respect to Wills, he provided that persons who had not children might demise their property to whomsoever they pleased ; the law on this head, before his time, being that the property of such persons should descend to their relations. He, however, guarded against deception and fraud in these cases, by providing that all wills procured by unfair and violent means—such as when the testator laboured under a derangement of mind arising from disease or poison, and when imprisonment, or violence, or the persuasions of a wife were employed, should be of no avail.

With a view to the encouragement of industry, and the promotion of manufactures, he ordained that all trades should be accounted honourable ; and that no son should be compelled to maintain his father under any circumstances, unless he had provided him with a trade. Illegitimate sons, however, were excluded from the operation of this law ; for in no case were they obliged to maintain their parents. According to Herodotus, it was considered a crime, under the laws of Solon, to live in idleness ; and the person who was convicted three times of this offence was declared infamous. Diodorus Siculus speaks of this as being a law of Egypt also ; and it is therefore likely that Solon derived it from the Egyptians, with whose laws and learning he was fully acquainted.

Without referring particularly to any more of the laws instituted by this wise and learned legislator for the guidance and control of the Athenian people, it may suffice to observe that they were all designed with an especial regard to the peculiar circumstances of the community, and had no pretension to an uniformity of system theoretically adapted to all conditions of men. They possessed the merit of an adaptation of means to an end ; which is perhaps the essence of all political wisdom. They were made for the people, for the country, for the time. They were natural, not forced ; suitable, not repellant ; and calculated to produce the best effects under the attendant circumstances.

One hundred years was the period which he assigned to the continuance of those laws ; after which, doubtless, he hoped that they would have produced a superstructure of social and political greatness, which would have rendered them and the people for whom they were designed alike imperishable in the memory of men. And so it was. Those laws, when perfected, were inscribed on wooden tablets, and enclosed in cases ; and in the time of Plutarch there were some remains of those tablets preserved in the Prytanium, or Court of the Judges called Prytanes. It is not to be presumed, however, that a code of laws so new in their nature and application, and so radical in their tendency, should meet with universal approbation. That is not to be expected in any stage of social or political reformation ; nor was it the case in the instance before us. Many faults were found, and much dissatisfaction was expressed, with some of

those laws ; while others of them were hailed with high approbation.

In order to evade the importunities of those who desired an alteration in those particular laws which happened not to harmonize with their notions, he resolved upon absenting himself from the country for a period of ten years. Having accordingly obtained permission from the people to absent himself for this space of time, he at once set sail for Egypt. Thence he proceeded to Cyprus ; and afterwards to Lydia, by the invitation of Crœsus, the king of that country.

CHAPTER XII.

Solon converses with the Egyptian priests—Story of the Atlantic Island—Solon's celebrated answers to the questions of Croesus.

DURING his abode in Egypt, or as he himself expresses it in one of his verses, "On the Canopian shore, by Nile's deep mouth," he spent his time agreeably in conversation with two of the most learned of the Egyptian priests. From these he heard the celebrated story of the Atlantic Island, which he constructed into a poem for the information of his countrymen. Plato afterwards wrote a description of this island from the information contained in this poem. He represented it as an island which lay somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean, exceeding in size Asia and Africa taken together, and which became submerged in the course of one day and night. Diodorus Siculus says that it was discovered by the Carthaginians, who prohibited any one from settling in it under the penalty of death. There have been various conjectures as to the locality and identity of this island ; one of which is—and it has been accounted the most probable one—that America was the place indicated ; of which the Africans are supposed to have some knowledge in those early days. Another conjecture is, that the Canary Islands afford the best

clue to the origin of the story of this mysterious isle. It is represented as abounding in all the luxury and gorgeousness of a rich and varied scenery, an exuberant soil, and a climate where the sun delights to revel in all his gayest and most winning moods. Homer's description of the *Atlantides* (Fortunate Islands), or what are now called the Canaries, would seem applicable to this fabled island:—

“Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime :
The fields are florid with unfading prime.
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow ;
But from the breezy deep the blest inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.”

Solon's celebrated replies to the questions of Cræsus are deserving of notice as affording evidence of the stern virtue and high-souled patriotism of the Athenian philosopher and reformer. Cræsus, after having conducted him through his palace, and exhibited to his view the profusion of wealth and splendour with which he was surrounded, put the question to him, “if he had ever beheld a happier man than he?” “Yes,” was the reply, “and that person was one Tellus, a plain but worthy citizen of Athens, who left worthy children after him ; and who, having spent his life in a moderate condition, free from want, died gloriously, fighting for his country.” Cræsus was little pleased with this answer, and looked upon Solon as a mean and vulgar clown who was incapable of appreciating wealth and high dignity. He notwithstanding, asked him again, “if, after Tellus, he knew any other man in the world that was happier than he?” “Yes,” said Solon ; “Cleobis and

Biton, two brothers who were famed for their love of one another, and their filial affection towards their mother; for the oxen not being in readiness, they put themselves in the harness, and drew their mother to Juno's temple, amid the blessings of the people. The sacrifice being ended, they drank a cheerful cup with their friends, and then went to rest: but they arose no more, for they died in the course of the night without sorrow or pain, in the midst of so much glory." The vanity of Cræsus was still less gratified than before; and he again asked him, "if he ranked him in the number of happy men?" Solon, unwilling to offer him unnecessary provocation, but, at the same time, resolute in his adherence to the principles and profession of truth, and the dictates of virtue, replied, "King of Lydia! as God has given the Greeks a moderate share of other things, so also has He favoured them with a democratic spirit, and a liberal kind of wisdom, which has no taste for the splendours of royalty. Besides, the vicissitudes of life permit us not to be elated by any present good fortune, or to admire that state of happiness which is liable to change. Futurity carries for every man many various and uncertain events in its bosom. He therefore whom heaven blesses with success to the last is, in our estimation, the happy man. But the happiness of him who still lives, and has the dangers of life to confront, appears to us no better than that of a champion before the combat is determined, and while the crown is uncertain." Solon then left the court of Cræsus; having produced no other effect, by his philosophy, upon the mind of his entertainer, than that of displeasure and anger.

CHAPTER XIII.

Pisistratus becomes ruler of Athens—The Lacedemonians assist the Athenians in their struggle for liberty—Pericles, and the Rule of Rascality—The Council of Four Hundred—The Thirty Tyrants—Re-establishment of Athenian liberty—Antipater ; and his successors.

IN the meantime the Athenians, in the absence of their lawgiver, became agitated and dissatisfied ; and the desire of change began to influence their actions. Pisistratus, at the head of the mountain party, was actively preparing the way for a blow at the existing state of things, with a view of securing the concentration of all political power in his own person. In this exigency of the public affairs Solon arrived at Athens, and was received by the people with demonstrations of unmitigated reverence and regard. His advanced age, however, and the infirmities which attend it, unfitted him for that course of strenuous action and unremitting labour which were, at the time and under the circumstances which surrounded him, essential to the repression of the disorderly ambition of the heads of the factions, and especially of Pisistratus, and to the preservation of the democracy, as he had established it. He struggled against the tide for a time ; but his efforts became ultimately fruit-

less : and Pisistratus, having concealed his real design from even the very party who supported him, and whom he merely used as the instrument of his ambition, though he could not disguise himself from the penetrating wisdom of Solon, advanced to the object of his desire ; and by the adoption of the manœuvre which I have already described in a former chapter, took violent possession of the supreme power.

Contrary to the general expectation, however, the tyrant continued to pay the utmost deference to the opinions of Solon ; and instead of abrogating his laws, he enforced the greatest part of them upon the observance of the people, by setting, in his own person, the example of subordination to their provisions. In a few years, however, after this usurpation. Solon passed away from the cares and tumults of the world ; leaving behind him a memory for wisdom, learning, and goodness, which has now survived a period of between two and three thousand years, and which will, doubtless, be prolonged to the end of time.

I have thus dwelt, at greater length perhaps than may be deemed necessary, upon the history and conduct of this extraordinary man ; but the circumstances attending his life ; the conspicuous figure which he presents amid the distinguished characters of his age ; the influence which his learning and wisdom exercised upon the sentiments, and manners, and policy of his country, an influence which extended even beyond his time and his country ; these are the considerations which justify me in lingering at more than ordinary length upon the name, and character, and achievements of Solon.

Pisistratus possessed the supreme power until his death, which occurred in thirty years from the date of his usurpation. And then succeeded his sons; of whom Hipparchus, as I have already observed, was slain by Aristogiton, who took the chief direction of the State. In a few years after this, the Athenians were rescued from slavery through the intervention of the Lacedemonians. It happened afterwards that Pericles, by curtailing the power of the Court of Areopagus, reduced the government to an Ochlocracy, or the rule of Rascality; according to the spirit of which the mere rabble became the predominant authority in the State. Next came the rule of the Council of Four Hundred; who upon the defeat of the Athenians in Sicily, succeeded, by the use of deception and falsehood, in securing to themselves the good-will of the people, and through that the control of the Government. Their power, however, was of short duration; for they yielded up their authority into the hands of the people, from fear of Alcibiades; and withdrew themselves into exile. Lysander having then conquered Athens, at the head of his Lacedemonian forces, established an Oligarchy consisting of thirty principal men. These were they who went under the name of the Thirty Tyrants. The oppressions and cruelties which they practised upon the people were of the most grievous and remorseless character; for though in the commencement of their reign they restricted the punishment of death to persons of wicked and depraved lives, yet they afterwards treated the good and bad with equal severity, being actuated solely by motives of envy or of avarice. To

strengthen and secure their ill-used power they created an armed corps consisting of three thousand men ; and forbade all others the use of arms, that their lives might be the more completely at their disposal. The people were at length roused to resistance, from the overstrained pressure with which this tyranny bore upon them ; and retiring to the castle of Phyle, on the confines of Athens, with Thrasybulus their leader, they made head against the tyrants ; and succeeded in throwing off the yoke, and re-establishing their liberties.

For eighty years afterwards they continued in the enjoyment of the freedom they had thus won ; but upon the death of Alexander of Macedon, fate frowned once more upon them. Antipater, the successor of Alexander, vanquished them at the battle of Lamia ; and in the arrangements for peace imposed upon them such conditions as rendered them entirely dependent on his power. They were these : that they should submit to be ruled by a few peers, or principal men whose revenues amounted at the least to two thousand drachmas, or about sixty pounds sterling ; that of these the chief should be Demetrius Phalareus ; and that they should receive a garrison into Munychia for the suppression of riots, and the establishment and preservation of the public tranquillity.

This state of things continued for the space of four years, at the end of which Antipater died, and Cassander became master of the city. He, however, dealt leniently with the people, for he left them their city, territories, revenues, and everything they had possessed before ; on these sole conditions : that they

would become his allies ; that no person whose revenues did not amount to at least ten minæ, or about thirty-two pounds sterling, should be competent to hold any office in the Commonwealth ; and that he himself should have the power to nominate whom he pleased to the supreme command of the State. The person whom he appointed to this office was Demetrius Phalareus ; whose administration was conducted with great wisdom and discretion, and contributed largely to the prosperity and lustre of the city, and the general happiness of the people. So much had he ingratiated himself with the citizens, by his zeal and energy in the promotion of their interests, that there were no less than three hundred statues erected in honour of him. He was the author, it is said, of a treatise on the Athenian Republic ; but this work has not come down to our times. After a rule of fourteen years, he was displaced by Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, who was surnamed Poliorcetes ; under whose sway the Athenians returned once more to their ancient laws and customs. In return for the services which this illustrious conqueror had rendered them, they conferred upon him and upon his father the title of King ; and they even went so far in their vile adulation as to style them the Gods' Protectors. They also appointed a priest to perform acts of worship to these Gods' Protectors ; after which priest they denominated the year, having first abolished the office and title of Archon, after whose name the year had been formerly called. They also added two tribes more to the ten already existing, which they called after the son and father, Demetrius and Anti-

gonus ; thus increasing the Senate from five hundred to six hundred members, each tribe having the privilege of supplying fifty. But such was the instability and levity of the Athenian character, that after Cassandra had defeated Phalareus and his father, they turned round and made common cause with the new victor, prohibiting Demetrius to come near the city.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Philip, King of Macedonia, brings Athens under his sway—He is expelled by the Romans—Invasion of the Goths—Constantine the Great, first Duke of Athens—A story of love and romance.

LACHARIS then became invested with arbitrary power; but soon afterwards Demetrius in turn expelled him, and assumed the sovereignty once more. After the death of Demetrius, Antigonus Gonatas succeeded; who in the nineteenth year of his reign garrisoned the city with soldiers; but in ten years afterwards removed them again. About this time the Macedonian power began to be felt in Athens; and Philip, the last but one of the kings of Macedon, held complete sway over it; until he was expelled by the Romans, who entered into a league with the Athenian people, by which the ancient rights and liberties of the latter were stipulated. This state of things continued uninterrupted until the breaking out of the war between Mithridates and the Romans. From apprehension of the anger of Mithridates, the Athenians were induced to receive his general, Archestratus, within their walls. Sylla, the Roman general, then laid siege to the city, and entered it. And such was the havoc that ensued on this occasion that, ac-

According to Appian, the streets literally ran with blood. Otherwise, however, the consequences to the citizens were not of any very injurious character, for their usual laws and institutions were still maintained, with but very little alteration. The Roman emperor, Julius Cæsar, as well as others of the Roman emperors, held them in high favour, and gave full play to the development of their institutions, and the exercise of their political liberties. In the reign of the second Claudius, the successor of Gallienus, the Goths invaded the city; and left behind them those terrible traces of devastation which was the usual accompaniment of their barbarous inroads upon the domain of European civilization. The works of art, the records of science, the treasures of literature, were the chief objects of destruction which strewed the blood-stained path of those savage hordes. It was on this occasion that, when they had piled together large masses of books for the purpose of committing them to the flames, they were exhorted, by way of inducing them to forego their unhallowed design, not to proceed in the work of destruction, since their views would be better subserved by saving the books; inasmuch as "the Greeks spending their time in reading them, might be made more unfit for war." The emperor, Constantine the Great, also held the city in high esteem, and assumed the title of the Grand Duke of Athens. The women of the city were regarded with a high degree of admiration by the Roman emperors, several of whom selected wives from amongst them; the daughters of their dukes being especially desired for this purpose.

The Spaniards are said to have had possession of the city for some time ; and one Rainerius Acciagolus is said to have recovered it from them. It is said that this Rainerius having had no issue by his wife, bequeathed, at his death, Bœotia and Thebes to his illegitimate son, Antonius ; and Athens to the Venetians. But his son soon after drove out the Venetians, and took possession of the city. He was succeeded by one Nerius, as Duke of Athens ; who was in his turn succeeded by his brother, Antonius Nerius. It was about this time that Mahomet, the son of Amurat II., got possession of Athens, whose beauty, splendour, and magnificence became the objects of his deepest admiration. He continued the usual title of Duke, as the distinctive appellation of the chief magistrate.

In connexion with the installation of the last person who bore this title we have on record one of those stories of love and romance which lie scattered along the pathway of history from its first opening. One Nerius, a different person from either of those I have mentioned above, became invested with the chief authority. After a brief space he died, leaving one son, an infant, heir to his title and authority. During the minority of this child, the mother in his right exercised the ruling power. A certain Venetian nobleman, in the meantime, came to Athens for the purchase of merchandise. He became acquainted with this woman, and in a short time became entangled in the meshes of her love ; or as an old historian presents it, "by discourse and flattery she enticed him into her love, promising that she would

take him for her husband, and give up the principedom of Athens to him." The only condition which this fair one annexed to the rare boon which she thus presented to the enraptured youth was this, that he should divorce his own wife, and thus yield his unencumbered neck to the silken bonds of his new lady-love.

The gentle youth gave word and plight that he would accede to the terms proposed ; and so he hied him to the shores of Venice, high-bounding with ambition, and burning with the sense of the high destiny which awaited him. But to divorce his wife would be a sacrifice too small for the high occasion : he slew her ; pouring forth her blood as an offering of thanksgiving at the shrine of the daughter of the sea-born goddess. He returns to Athens, is married to the princess-mother, and assumes the reins of government. Time flows on ; the Athenians hate him ; he is represented in an unfavourable light at the Court of Mahomet ; and at length, to turn envy and danger aside, he assumes the title and duties of the child's tutor. Some time after this he takes the boy with him, and repairs to the court of the Mussulman. There he met one Francus Acciojulus who, like himself, was speculating on honours and high favour, and seeking to be promoted to the dukedom. The emperor inquired about all, and heard all. He listened to the story of the amiable lady and of the enamoured youth ; and turned away in high displeasure from the recital. Francus Acciojulus was installed into the dukedom ; and the frail and faithless princess was committed to close confinement by her

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successful opponent, on the island of Megara ; and some time after put to death. In course of time this same Francus was placed beyond all earthly aspirations by one Zogan, the Governor of Peloponnesus, in consequence of intelligence having reached Mahomet that the Prince of Bœotia was about being installed by the Athenians as their lawful emperor. So Francus Acciojulus was the last Duke of Athens.

CHAPTER XV.

The Religion of the ancient Greeks—Their twelve principal Gods—The source whence their worship was derived—The Unknown Gods.

THE worship of the ancient Greeks was a sort of Polytheism, consisting in the adoration of a multiplicity of gods. To all the objects of Nature, to all existences, changes, accidents that pervade air, earth, and water, they assigned individual gods. Their religion was one unbroken web of superstition. Among the countless number, however, of those supernatural and presiding spirits, they made a special selection of twelve, whom they kept in the highest reverence. To these they appealed on all occasions of joy, grief, hope, despondency; under all circumstances of good or evil fortune; and confessed their particular agency in all the transactions of daily life. The pictures of these twelve gods they kept in a gallery in the Ceramicus; and had an altar erected to them called *βωμὸς τῶν δώδεκα θεῶν*, or altar of the twelve gods. Their ordinary mode of asseveration was in the name of these deities: by the twelve gods was their common expression of solemn declaration. The names of these gods are familiar to all classical students: they are Saturn, Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Her-

cules, Venus, Diana, Bacchus, Minerva, Ceres, Juno, and Pan.

Of the origin of the religion of the Greeks, it is not easy to speak with confidence, inasmuch as the Greek historians themselves differ in opinion upon this point. Herodotus says that it was derived from the Egyptians; and this testimony is somewhat corroborated by the fact that some of the ancient Egyptian deities were the same in attributes, power, and office as some of those principal gods of the Greeks. For instance, the Grecian deity, Ceres, has her prototype in the goddess Isis of the Egyptians; and the Grecian Minerva, in the Egyptian Sais. Plutarch, however, rejects this derivation, and refuses to accept the authority of Herodotus. Aristophanes and Euripides appear to concur in the opinion that the Grecian worship was derived from the Thracians, through the medium of Orpheus. The very words used by the Greeks to signify the subject and act of paying adoration to the gods seem to point to this derivation:—*ὀρησσία* and *ὀρησκεύειν* signifying *worship* and *to worship*. "Orpheus," says Aristophanes, "showed us sacrifices, and to abstain from slaughter." And Euripides, in reference to the same point says, "Orpheus revealed the hidden mysteries." Orpheus was himself a Thracian; and the allusions made to him by the writers I have mentioned, coupled with the Thracian origin of the words employed in expressing devotion and the worship of the gods, would seem to leave no doubt as to the source whence sprang the Grecian form of worship. Yet, Herodotus, who is the father of history, thinks other-

wise, as we have seen ; and points to Egypt as the fountain-head of the religion of Greece.

“ Who can decide when doctors disagree ? ”

But whoever imagined that the worship of the ancient Greeks was confined to the twelve gods whose names I have given, would mistake the nature of the Grecian Theocracy. This system of superstitious worship embraced what has been called the *seven kinds of idolatry*. There was FIRST, the worship of the sun ; the neglect of which, according to Plutarch, was punished by death. SECOND, that of *Bread*, of which the goddess Ceres was the representative deity. THIRD, that of the *Furies*, who avenged the commission of crimes. FOURTH, that of the passions and affections, as of love, pity, and so forth : even injury and impudence had their altars and their worship. FIFTH, that of the accidents of growth and nourishment, of which Axo and Thallo were the presiding deities ; the former being derived from *αὐξάνειν*, to increase ; and the latter from *θάλλειν*, to flourish. To these may likewise be added the three sisters, called the Fates, viz., Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos ; and also *εἰμαρμένη*, or Necessity, sometimes taken for Death itself. SIXTH, the worship of the Theogony, that is, the generation, or pedigree of gods, of whom Homer speaks of not less than *three thousand*. SEVENTH, that of the repellers of evils and diseases, as of Hercules, the destroyer of wild animals, and Esculapius, the god of physic. Besides all these imaginary superintendents of their life and destinies, they had deities who presided over hospitality and good enter-

tainment to strange gods. "As the Athenians," says Strabo, "love foreigners, so also do they love foreign gods." They had also adventitious, or accidental gods, as Orthane, Conisfalus, and Tychon. In short, they peopled the whole universe with gods of various denominations, powers, and avocations, bounding their empire only by the limits of the imagination. When St. Paul preached Jesus, and the resurrection of the dead, they immediately set up *'Ανάστασις*, or Resurrection, for a god. But stranger still; in order that no possible deity might be omitted from their system of worship, they erected altars to what they termed the UNKNOWN GODS. This worship of the unknown gods occurred in consequence of Philipides (whom they had sent as ambassador to the Lacedemonians, praying their assistance against the Persians) having seen a vision in which Pan complained that he was neglected whilst other gods were worshipped; and promised the Athenians his assistance. Having been victorious over the Persians, they forthwith erected a temple and an altar to the UNKNOWN GOD. Another version of the origin of this new species of worship is, that a plague raged in Athens; and the people finding no relief from the invocations they had made to all the known deities; and supposing that some other power had sent the disease, erected a new altar inscribed with the words, "To the gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa; to the unknown and strange god."

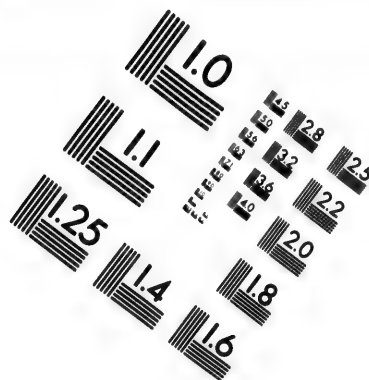
CHAPTER XVI.

Jupiter, the principal God of the Athenians—He presided over the Laws of Hospitality—Apollo, Mercury, Juno, Saturn, Ceres, and other Athenian Divinities.

BESIDES the innumerable gods already referred to, there were other varieties of deities, such as the city and household gods; and the demi-gods, or souls of heroes. Of the *δώδεκα θεοί*, or twelve principal gods, Jupiter was the one who was regarded with the highest degree of reverence by the Athenians. They worshipped him under different forms; attributing to him various powers and influences in the conduct of human affairs. He was their president of law and justice; their god of supplicants: the governor and director of their councils; the chief of their societies, as well as of their friendships, and their kindred. He was also their god of thunder; the overseer of their traffic; the guardian and protector of their homesteads. He presided over the laws of hospitality, and the entertainments to strangers; which was in their belief a position of the highest and most solemn importance; for no people set a higher estimate than they on the proper reception and entertainment of strangers, or received them with greater ceremony. An interchange of the right hand was

used as the form of introduction, and as a sign of assurance of fidelity and security; then followed the purification, or washing with salt and water. Salt was with them the true emblem of hospitality; so that in any case of neglect of duty in this respect, the usual question was *ποῦ ἅλς*; "where is the salt?" The efficacy of salt in the cementing of friendships among the Greeks and Romans, is a matter with which all persons versed in classical literature are acquainted. Cicero says that "Men must eat many measures of salt together before they can become perfect friends." Demosthenes also refers to the potency of salt to the same end. In their sacrifices also the Athenians invoked Jupiter to be witness of their fidelity to the laws of hospitality in the following words: "Let the offence I commit be against Jupiter Xenius" (that is, Jupiter, the patron of hospitality), "if I neglect strangers." Even the posterity of those who had once been received into the hospitality of the Athenians had a claim upon its continuance through the medium of what was called the huckle-bone; that is, whenever a stranger was departing from Athens, a hip or huckle bone was divided into two parts by his entertainer, one of which was given him as a pledge of continued friendship; and whenever any of his posterity returned to the city, bringing this half of the bone with him, he was immediately received into the position of hospitality which his ancestor had formerly enjoyed. The same law applied to the posterity of the other party under similar circumstances. This was called a symbol of friendship and hospitality; and was often sent by its





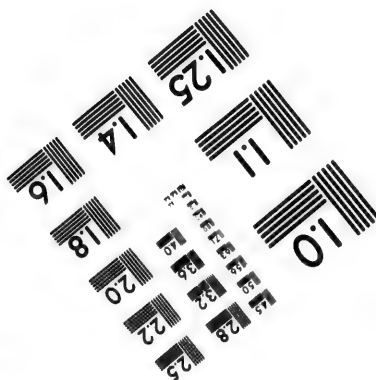
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possessor to his acquaintances when they travelled, that they might secure the advantages which it conferred.

Next to Jupiter, Apollo was held in the highest estimation among the Athenian people. He was always invoked in cases of danger under the names of Ἀποτρόπαιος and Ἀλεξίκακος; that is, the repeller of evils. He was one of the first gods whom they worshipped; whence he was styled Πατρῶος. The name Πατρῶος, which signifies progenitor, may have been adopted from the fact that the sun, which is indicated by the term Apollo, is the source of all animal and vegetable life. This god had altars erected to him in the streets, and was even worshipped as the protector of the houses of the citizens, under the name of Θυραῖος, that is, the door or gate keeper. The name, however, under which he became most celebrated was that of Παιάν, which originated, we are told, in the following manner. The Athenians having, in the time of Theseus, applied to Apollo's oracle at Delphos for assistance against the Amazons, they were told by the god that they must invoke his assistance with the words *Io Pæan*. The word *Io* is an abbreviation, by the Greeks, of the word *Jehova*; and *Pæan* is derived from the Hebrew word *Penoh*, which signifies *to look*; so that the words *Io Pæan* signify *Lord, look* (upon us). *Io Pæan* was a song or hymn chanted by the Greeks, invoking Apollo to put an end to a plague, or to turn away present or approaching danger. It is a curious and remarkable circumstance that there was a certain tribe or people of the West Indies, called the Symerons, who, accord-

ing to the account of Sir Francis Drake, used, when fighting, to dance, leap, and sing *Yo Peho*.

Mercury was another favourite god among the Greeks. He presided over trade and commerce; and is represented as artful, and cunning of speech. His statue was erected in the market-place, and called 'Ερμῆς Ἀγοραῖος. The protection of houses against the assaults of thieves was also confided to him; and his statue was placed behind the entrance doors, in order to repel the first attempt of evil intruders. Saturn and Vulcan were also held in no small favour by the Athenians, as divinities to whose assistance they had frequent recourse. The former had feasts established in his honour called the *Κρόνια*, and also a temple dedicated to his worship. The latter had likewise a temple, in which was one of the Athenian prisons, and where some controversies in law were wont to be decided. The god Neptune was an old patron of the city, and contested the palm of presidency with Minerva; by whom, however, he was defeated. Mars, Hercules, Castor and Pollux, Harmodius and Aristogiton, and innumerable other gods and demi-gods, had their temples, rites, and offerings in this celebrated Queen of Cities. Minerva, however, was the especial divinity of the Athenians. The celebrated festivals of the *Panathenæa* were established in her honour; and the empire of wisdom and learning, of science and of art, became consolidated in the hands of her favourite and chosen people. Ceres and Proserpina came next in order of the female deities; whose rites were entitled the Eleusinian mysteries. These were of two sorts, the

greater and the lesser; the former in honour of Ceres, and the latter of Proserpina. Whosoever revealed these mysterious rites were punishable by death; and none save the initiated were admitted to a participation in them. Bacchus, the son of Ceres, and the presiding divinity of the wine cup, had also a temple dedicated to his worship in Athens; as had Venus, the goddess of love, on whose altar offerings and sacrifices were constantly made. The *Eumenides*, or Furies, called the venerable goddesses, were first adored by Orestes after he had escaped judgment in the Court of the Areopagus, where he was tried for the murder of his mother, Clytemnestra. These divinities were propitiated by drink-offerings, without wine, which were made at midnight. They were the only divinities, with the exception of Bacchus, whose rites were performed in the night-time. The manner of offering was as follows:—The worshipper, having first purified his hands by washing, drew water from a running fountain; and filling three cups with water and honey, and covering their mouths with the wool of a young sheep, he turned himself towards the east, and poured out a portion of the contents of two and the whole of the third cup; then planting three times nine branches of olive with both his hands on the place where he poured out his libations, he pronounced his intended supplications.

Hecate, who was a sort of threefold goddess, ruling in heaven under the semblance of the moon, on earth as Diana, and in the lower regions under the name of Hecate, had sacrifices offered to her *in triviis*, or at the meeting of three roads. At every new

moon the wealthier classes of the people made offerings to her at cross-roads, placing bread and other food there for the use of the poor.

The rites performed in honour of the goddess Juno partook of a pompous and imposing character; the celebrants appearing in long flowing garments, with their hair sweeping in loose masses down the neck and shoulders, and their movements slow, solemn and erect. Hence the Roman expression *Junonem incedere*, to walk like Juno, implies a majestic and dignified bearing.

The ceremony of worship in honour of Prometheus, whom they esteemed as the person who stole the vital spark from heaven for the creation of the first man, was performed by a torch-dance, in which the persons engaged ran up and down with lighted torches, or burning lamps.

The number of statues erected to commemorate their gods was immense. They had some before their doors which they called Θεοὶ ἀνθήλαιοι, that is, gods exposed to the sun. There were others called *Hermæ Mercuriales*, which were sacred to the god Mercury. The form and construction of these were different at different times; but the usual form was that of a head and neck placed on the top of a square pillar, called *Truncus Hermes*. They were also called ἄγυιαι, or limbless. The lower parts were inscribed with verses commemorative of the virtuous deeds of distinguished men. There was a public gallery in Athens containing a great number of these Mercurial statues, which, from that circumstance, was called Ἐρμῶν στοά, the gallery of the statues of

Mercury. These were covered with inscriptions expressive of the exploits and glorious deeds of men of renown. Besides those statues they had their full-sized and perfectly formed gods. They stood erect, with their hands lifted upwards, to indicate that they were more disposed to receive than to grant favours. It is to this supposed disposition on their part that Aristophanes alludes where he says, "Even the gods you shall know by their hands and statues. For when we pray them to give us some good thing, they stand with their hands upward, as if they would not give any thing, but rather take something."

CHAPTER XVII.

Superstition of the Ancients—Comparison of ancient and modern practices of superstition—The Irish and English peasantry remarkable for their superstitious observances.

HAVING said thus much about the gods, and the religious ceremonies of the Athenians, we now come to their superstitions properly so called, and their doctrines and practices of vaticination, or prophecy. Superstition, which may not inaccurately be defined an excess of religious feeling and belief, has prevailed more or less in all countries and ages of the world; every nation having its own distinctive peculiarities in this respect; while all seem to possess some fundamental points in common, though varied in some immaterial circumstances. The Athenians were excessively addicted to this sort of belief, and guided by its influence in all the relations of life. It is curious to trace some of their practices in this respect, and to compare them with those which in modern times have prevailed in the different countries of Europe; and which even in the present day are prevalent amongst the ignorant and uneducated of our own Saxon and Celtic people. Purification after frightful dreams was a prevailing practice in Athens; and something similar to this may be found among na-

tions at the present time. I know that it is a very common belief with certain classes in Ireland, and with their descendants in America, that dreams are prophetic of events either happening at the moment of the nightly vision, or about to happen soon afterwards. Hence, after awaking from a dream portending anything fearful or horrible, they cross themselves with the right hand, sprinkling themselves at the same time with holy water, and praying that they might be protected against all evils. The wearing of rings as a protection or charm against witchcraft was also a general practice among the Athenians. This, too, is a custom of the present time, but under various modifications. Another curious custom amongst them was spitting into their bosom three times whenever they saw a madman, or a person affected with epilepsy. In Ireland, among the uneducated country people, the fasting spittle, as it is called, that is the saliva formed before food has been taken in the morning, is considered a cure in some particular diseases; and in England spitting out at the mention of the name of the devil is a common practice among the ignorant classes. I have myself seen in parts of Ireland old women coming to the bedside of sick persons, and spitting three times into their faces, saying at the same time, in the Irish language, "a blessed drop on you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." I am not quite sure whether this was done without reference to the disease under which the patient laboured, or whether it was confined to some particular ailment; but I am inclined to the former view: for this ceremony is not confined to

sick people; it is sometimes extended to those in health. I remember well, when a boy, that I was often saluted in this way by old nurses and cronies of the family when meeting me on the road-side. They would walk over to me; fold me in their arms; impress a kiss upon my cheek; and then spitting, or rather pretending to spit (for there was no saliva), into my face, would pronounce the words of benediction I have mentioned. We have reason to believe, from the observations of some of the Greek writers, that this superstitious custom among the people of Athens was meant to indicate a defiance of evil spirits, and such would appear to be its import among the peasantry of England and Ireland in the modifications of the practice to which I have alluded. Washing the head with water as often as a person went into the streets was another of the Athenian superstitions; and anointing or pouring oil over stones was another. We find in the Book of Genesis that Jacob, when journeying to Padan Aram, took the stone in Bethel, which he had used as his pillow, and, setting it up, poured oil on the top of it. Our ceremonials of dedication are somewhat analogous to the anointing of stones among the Greeks. The crowing of hens; the entrance of a black dog into a house; the appearance of a serpent; a cat or weasel crossing one's path; a mouse eating into one's salt-bag;—all these were subjects of superstitious import among the people of Athens. To-day, if an Irish peasant were setting out on a journey, and a weasel or black cat crossed his path, or a magpie met him on the wayside, he would immediately mark

himself with the sign of the cross, and retrace his steps. The crowing of a hen, too, and the entrance of a black dog, have their due weight in his superstitious imaginings; and as for rats and mice eating into the salt-bag, or otherwise making unusual inroads on his eatables or wearables, but particularly the latter, there could be no doubt in his mind of the approaching calamity which such a state of things prognosticated: and in this respect honest John Bull is equally decided in his belief. It was an opinion entertained by the ancients that sacred persons were defiled by the sight of the dead; and hence such persons always avoided funeral rites, for fear of pollution. Diana is represented by Euripides as saying that it was not lawful for her to behold Hippolitus as he was dying. The observance of lucky and unlucky days was a prevalent superstition among the ancient Greeks, as it is among some people in our own day. Friday is with us an unlucky day, among the days of the week; as are also some other days in the year in reference to particular undertakings and employments.

Eclipses of the sun and moon were subjects of wonder among the ancients, they not being able to account for the causes of those phenomena. For facilitating delivery in child-birth the Greeks were accustomed to employ certain medicines, and also enchanted stones; and we learn that at Darien, in America, the women used a certain herb for the same purpose. In the matter of sneezing, it was regarded as of much consequence by the people of Athens that it should be done over the right shoulder and the right side. I do not know that in our day people pay much attention to this point; but it is certain

that a sturdy Hibernian would deem it any thing but lucky if he did not accompany his sternutation with a "God bless us." Sudden storms of snow or hail were objects of superstitious observation to the ancients. It was also one of their customs to cut off their hair, and sacrifice it to rivers. In Ireland it is a custom among the peasantry, whenever they cut off their hair, to gather it up in a ball, and stick it into a hole in a wall, or under the thatch of the cabin; for they believe that on the day of judgment they will have to collect together all the hair they had ever lost, and have it with them in the next world. They would no more burn it than they would thrust their heads into the fire.

With the Athenians the flight of the owl was an object of very serious attention : *γλαυξ ἵπταται*, the owl hath fled, was an announcement of good luck. At the battle of Salamis they renewed their flagging courage upon seeing an owl; and then charged home upon the barbarian foe, and put him to flight. Ever afterwards they held the owl in special veneration, as a symbol of victory; and drew omens from its flight.

Æsculapius was worshipped by them as the god of medicine; and it was a common practice with those who laboured under any bodily or mental infirmity to sleep in the temple of this god, in the hope that he would inform them of some remedy: in requital of which they were accustomed to offer him a cock in sacrifice. So great was their veneration for Æsculapius that they, as we are informed, inflicted capital punishment upon one Atarbes who, in a fit of delirium, had killed a sparrow consecrated to this deity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Vaticination, or prophesy among the Greeks—Necromancy, or the Magic Art—Philtrea, or love medicines—The prophetic circle; casting of dice; and other modes of ascertaining future events.

THERE were several forms of vaticination, or prophecy, among the ancients. The interpretation of dreams was one of these. *Æschylus* represents *Prometheus* as claiming the honour of being the first who introduced this art among men. *Hecuba*, the mother of *Paris*, who was the cause of the destruction of the renowned city of *Troy*, had dreamt, when pregnant of him, that she should bring forth a firebrand. And *Atossa*, the mother of *Xerxes*, the Persian king who was overthrown by the Greeks, dreamt, some time before the fall of her son, that she saw him striving to yoke a barbarian and a Greek woman; one of whom slew him. The Greeks believed that dreams were sent by some deity to acquaint men with coming events. There was another form of vaticination called *Οἰωνιστικόν*, or prophesying by birds, which was performed by observing the relative position of birds in their flight with respect to the observer; whether it was before or behind him; to his right or to his left side.

The foretelling of events by the colour and condition of the liver or entrails of animals was another form of divination among the ancients. This was called ἡπατικὸν by the Greeks, and *Extispicium* by the Latins or Romans. The Greeks also drew prognostics from various accidental circumstances; as when meeting persons on the road, they drew omens from the peculiar nature of the burden which they carried, or the things which they had about them. They also predicted some event from seeing a mouse, cat, or serpent in the house; also from the act of sneezing, as I have already observed. When the oil-cruse ran dry, they peered into futurity by means of honey, wine, and water. All these things we gather from the allusions in the works of their historians and dramatic writers.

Palmistry was another mode of divination practised amongst them. This they called *Cheiroskopoutikon*. By the length of the hand, and the lines on the palm, they judged of events connected with house-keeping, marriage, and offspring. A further species of divination was effected by the shaking of certain parts of the body; as of the shoulder, the upper part of the leg, and of the right eye. This was called *Palmistikon*.

Another form was that called *Engastrimuthia*: according to which the prophetic announcement was made from the regions of the bowels. This is supposed to have been the mode whereby the Witch of Endor performed her incantations. Eurycles is thought to have been the first who practised it amongst the Athenians; hence the name of Euryclitæ was given to those who were skilled in this

mode of prophecy. They also practised the mode of acquiring knowledge of future events through the medium of the dead. This was called *Nekuomanteia*; from which our word "necromancy" is derived. According to this mode they were accustomed, after solemn sacrifices, to call up the souls of deceased persons, and obtain from them such information as they desired with respect to the future. This was called *Mageia*, or the magic art; and was divided into the black and white, according to the character of the spirits invoked—whether they were the souls of good or wicked persons.

The Medes and Persians were acquainted with the meaning of the word *mageia*, for they called their philosophers *magi*; but we cannot say that they invested the word with the same meaning as the Greeks. The Athenians also dealt in philtra, or love medicine. This was done by bewitching, or producing a spell over something, and then giving it to be eaten by the person who was to be moved to love. It is said that this medicament had power over swine. They had various other tricks of superstition; one of which was performed with a pair of shears and a sieve, and another with a hatchet and a piece of wood. In the latter case the hatchet was laid flat on the wood, and then, after the necessary process of incantation had been proceeded with, the hatchet turned round of its own free agency. This bears a resemblance to the trick of the key and Bible in our own day. The casting of dice, for the purpose of ascertaining the number of wives, children, and other benefits which they were to have, was also

a favourite practice with them: this was called *Astragallomanteia*. They had another trick called *Ornithomanteia*, according to which they formed a circle, and dividing it into twenty-four parts, made a letter on each part, on which they placed a grain of corn; then bringing in a cock, they observed the letters from which he picked up the grains in succession; and from this they discovered the names of their successors, or husbands, or wives, and so on. Discovering what was to happen by opening a book of Homer, and selecting a verse from the right or left page, was another mode of prophecy in much vogue amongst them: this they called *Stoichiomanteia*. The death of Socrates was divined in this way, by the occurrence of that verse of Homer which refers to the arrival of Achilles within three days at Thessaly. They regarded poems as prophecies, and poets as prophets. The Romans, too, had a custom somewhat similar to this, for in the same manner as the Greeks consulted the verses of Homer in private affairs, the Romans had recourse to those of the Sibylline Oracles in public matters. They had various other superstitious tricks and practices, which it would be tedious and unprofitable to enumerate.

CHAPTER XIX.

Greek Churches—Their origin and nature—the several classes of persons set apart for the purposes of public worship—The Priests.

THE churches of the ancient Greeks were of two classes: the one class were dedicated to the gods, especially so called; the other to the demi-gods, or inferior set of divinities. It is said that the origin of churches or temples among them is to be ascribed to their veneration for the dead, over whom, and in whose honour, they erected those edifices; which were afterwards devoted to the purposes of propitiatory sacrifices and religious ceremonies. Cecrops, one of the first kings of Athens, was buried in the Acropolis; and Erechthonius, another of their kings, in the temple of Minerva. The church was divided into two parts, the *sacred* and the *profane*; the former for the accommodation of the priests, and the latter for that of the laity. Casaubon says that a font of holy water was placed at the door, and that the people sprinkled themselves with it as they entered the church; but other authorities say that this font was kept at the entrance of the adytum, into which the priests alone were permitted to go. The scholiast of Sophocles, in describing the several parts

of the church, says that the altar was called *βωμός*, and the place where it stood *ναός*; and that the place where stood the idol or image of the god whom they worshipped was called *γέφυρος*. At first this idol was but a rude block; but it was afterwards shaped into the figure of a man, and called *βρέτας*, from its resemblance to the human shape. At the setting up of this idol a woman decked in a purple garment brought upon her head a pot of boiled pulse, as beans, peas, and so forth; which were afterwards offered up as first fruits in acknowledgment of the dependence of the people on the favour of the divinity. There was also a treasury attached to the temple, or rather constituting the upper part of it, which was intended not only for the preservation of the property belonging to the church itself, but also for that of persons wishing to transfer any portion of their wealth there for its better security. Xenophon is represented as having done this in the temple of Diana in Ephesus. The Greek were remarkably attentive to the cleanness and decency of their churches, and surrounding grounds; and punished with great severity, even in some instances with death, any persons found offending in this respect. They even granted privilege of sanctuary to their churches; so that any persons who fled to them could not be arrested or taken away thence without an offence against religion. The first asylum of this kind among the ancients is said to have been in Athens, and erected by the Heraclidæ. The officers connected with the sacrifices of the temple and the ceremonials of religion were of various kinds, each having his peculiar province assigned him in

the general business of the public worship. One class of these were called *παράσιτοι*; a term from which perhaps our word "parasite" is derived, though with a far different signification. The word, as used amongst us, carries with it an opprobrious meaning. *Edax parasitus* are words used by Terence; and they convey our idea, which is that of hungry shark, or smell-feast. The Greek parasites, however, were not regarded in this ignominious and hateful light; on the contrary, they were held in great esteem. Their duty was to collect the revenues of the Church from such lands as were set apart for its support. And in this respect the Greeks made most ample provision for the maintenance of their Church establishment. The persons who were set apart for the purpose of slaying and offering up the victim in sacrifice were called *κήρυκες*. To these great honour was wont to be paid, as they were looked upon as the persons who first taught men to boil their food, such as the flesh of sheep and oxen, which before had been used in a raw state. It is said that they derived their name from *κρείττονος*, which signifies better, because they selected the better or more tender part of the victim for their own use. During the performance of the divine rites they craved the silence of the people with the words *λαῶν ἄφεςις*, "let the people retire." There was another order of sacred officers called *Μυσταγωγοί*, or *Ἱεροφάνται*, whose province it was to initiate into the society of the zealous such as had a desire to enter into it. Those who became members of this society were not permitted to see their Bible for twelve months after their initiation. Moses has been represented as

an Hierophantes among the Israelites ; for it was his business to initiate and instruct them in their sacred duties. The order of *Πυρφόροι* were those whose business it was to light the fire upon the altars. Their persons were held sacred on all occasions of danger and war. The expression, *οὐδὲ πυρφόρος*, "not even the lighters of the altar-fires," on occasions of great and indiscriminate calamity, expressed the sacredness with which the character of those who lighted the fires upon the altar was regarded by the ancients. There was another order called the *Ἱεροποιοί*, or Priests of the great Mysteries, who were ten in number. And another called the *Νεωκόροι*, whose duty it was to keep the place of worship clean, and in decent and good condition. But the order of *Ἱερείς* was the highest and most important of all. They were the priests who continually waited on the gods, and who offered prayers at the sacrifices. Their fees of office were of a rather curious kind ; for Aristophanes informs us that they consisted of the trotters and skins of the animals slain for the sacrifice ; while the tongues fell to the lot of the *Κήρυκες*, or Cryers. Besides these, however, they had the oblations which the worshippers laid upon the table of the temple. It was an indispensable condition that those who offered themselves for this office of priesthood should be of sound body and constitution ; so that upon presenting themselves they were asked whether they were whole in every member. There was likewise an order of female priests among the ancient Greeks ; similar, it has been supposed, to that of the vestal nuns among the old Romans.

CHAPTER XX.

Public Sacrifices—First fruits, and burnt offerings—Mode and manner of offering Sacrifices—Homer's description of a sacrifice in honour of Apollo.

THE sacrifices of the ancients are represented as taking place at the end of the harvest in each year ; this being the season when people were disengaged from their more pressing labours, and at liberty to indulge in mirth and jollification. They then offered their first fruits to the gods in acknowledgment of the blessings they had received through their divine beneficence. In the early periods of Grecian history, and up to the time of Draco, the offerings to the gods consisted of the fruits of the earth ; but in Solon's time, and before it, burnt offerings came into practice. Those who took part in the sacrifices were obliged to go through a process of purification some days previous to the solemnization of them. Tibullus says, "*Discedite ab aris quos tulit hesterna gaudia nocte Venus :*" whence it may be inferred that all sexual intercourse was forbidden for some time before the commencement of the sacrifices, as an indispensable condition to a participation in them. Being thus prepared, they assembled around the altar, having with them a basket in which was deposited a knife (covered

with flour and salt) with which they slew the victim. They then performed the ceremony of purifying the altar ; moving around it, with the right hand towards it. This lustration consisted of meal sprinkled with holy water. This water was called *Χέρνιψ* ; in which they quenched a brand taken from the fire. They besprinkled those who were present with it, for the purpose of cleansing or purifying them, and thereby rendering them worthy of a participation, by their presence, in the august ceremony about to be celebrated. They next cast some of the flour upon them ; and then proceeded by crying aloud, *τίς τῇδε* ; "who is here ?" to which they answered, *πολλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ*, "many and good." They then prayed. The sacrifice prepared by the Greeks upon the restoration of the daughter of Chryses, as related by Homer, affords a specimen of the mode and manner of proceeding on such occasions :—

Then near the altar of the darting king
 Disposed in rank their hecatomb they bring ;
 With water purify their hands, and take
 The sacred offering of the salted cake.
 While thus with arms devoutly raised in air
 And solemn voice the priest directs his prayer,
 God of the silver bow, thy ear incline,
 Whose power encircles Cilla the divine ;
 Whose sacred eye thy Tenedos surveys,
 And gilds fair Chrysa with distinguish'd rays !
 If, fired to vengeance at thy priest's request,
 Thy direful darts inflict the raging pest,
 Once more attend, avert the wasteful woe,
 And smile propitious, and unbend thy bow.

The description of the sacrifice is given so fully an

minutely by the great father of poetry, that I cannot resist the temptation of quoting it at length. I give it in the words of Pope's translation :—

So Chryses prayed ; Apollo heard his prayer ;
And now the Greeks their hecatomb prepare ;
Between their horns the salted barley threw,
And with their heads to heaven the victims slew.
The limbs they sever from th' enclosing hide ;
The thighs, selected to the gods, divide ;
On these in double cauls involved with art
The choicest morsels lay from every part.
The priest himself before his altar stands,
And burns the offering with his holy hands,
Pours the black wine, and sees the flames aspire ;
The youth with instruments surround the fire ;
The thighs thus sacrificed, and entrails drest,
Th' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest :
Then spread the tables, the repast prepare ;
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.
When now the rage of hunger was repress'd,
With pure libations they conclude the feast :
The youths with wine the copious goblets crown'd,
And pleased dispensed the flowing bowls around.
With hymns divine the joyous banquet ends,
The pæans lengthen'd till the sun descends ;
The Greeks, restored, the grateful notes prolong ;
Apollo listens, and approves the song.

The sacrificing priests were accustomed to cry aloud at the commencement of the sacrifice, *εὐχόμεθα*, "let us pray." At the conclusion of the prayer the victim was slain, with the "head to heaven," as the poet expresses it. But this position of the head occurred only when the sacrifice was made to the superior gods. When made to the herbes, or demi-gods, the neck was bent downwards. After this the

whole proceeding, as recorded by Homer, was gone through, and the sacrifice thus consummated. The conclusion of the sacrifice was usually marked by shameful excesses. Gluttony, drunkenness, and voluptuous indulgences of every kind were practised ; and thus the awful celebration of public worship became the occasion and the spur to the grossest indecency and profligacy of conduct.

CHAPTER XXI.

Tragedy and Comedy—Their origin and derivations—Homer's poems—The Festival of Bacchus—Virgil's description of this festival.

THE origin of tragedy and comedy, as to the mode and manner of representing by composition the habits and manners of men, is by the common consent of ancient writers attributed to Homer, the immortal author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The peculiar characteristics of the various scenes in each of these wonderful compositions most fitly represent the nature and qualities of the tragic and the comic Muse. The conciseness and striking effect with which the grave and awful events of the *Iliad* are set forth, may be said to constitute the very essence of tragedy; while the lighter, freer, and less condensed treatment of the varying and diversified scenes of the *Odyssey* forms an apt illustration of the spirit and genius of comic representation. That Homer's treatment of his subjects in both his great works suggested to later writers the manner in which the graver and lighter scenes of life should be embodied forth in words, should not admit of a doubt. In fact, the *Iliad* is nothing more or less than a continued series of tragedies written in the closest, most concise, and

most impressive manner. The language, the sentiments, and the positions of the actors in the various scenes are all perfect. Life in its most striking and forcible combinations ; in the energy and vehemence of its passions ; and in the variety of its most affecting and attractive positions, is reflected with a precision and an adherence to truth and nature unsurpassed, if not unequalled, in any productions with which genius has since delighted and enlightened the world. It is the general belief that these great works of the father of poetry were originally separate and distinct tragedies and comedies ; and that it was only in after ages they were collected and arranged in the order and connexion in which we now possess them. Whether they were ever acted on anything like a stage in the time of Homer, or at any time afterwards, we have no means of ascertaining ; but there is reason to believe that they were recited or sung before public audiences. In the age of Homer, and for centuries afterwards, there was nothing at all resembling the stage of the present day ; but yet there were public recitations of poems, and a sort of rude, unpolished, and grotesque acting on occasions of public festivities, and of periodical meetings for purposes of mirth and jollity. On such occasions it may be presumed that Homer, and after him, those who had committed his strains to memory, or who imitated them by rude efforts of their own, entertained the people by poetic recitations. We are told that the word "comedy" is derived from *κῶμος*, a revel or merry-making, because this kind of strain was recited or sung at the festival of Bacchus, the god of the wine cup. Others, again,

think that it is derived from the word *κῶμα*, which signifies sleep ; and that it arose from the custom of the husbandmen of the Attic nation running at night into the streets whenever they suffered injury from marauders, and crying out aloud that despite of gods and laws such and such persons committed outrages. By this mode of procedure the offenders were brought to justice, and the injured parties redressed. Again, it is supposed to derive its origin from the word *κῶμα*, a street, because whenever the Athenians wished to expose the evil practices and dishonest life of any citizen, they went into the streets and public highways, and proclaimed his vices, and laid bare his whole life. This derivation is the most probable ; but even the other conjectures tend to show the nature and style of comic composition at this early stage of the dramatic art. Donatus, in his Treatise on Tragedy and Comedy, says, in reference to this last-named custom, " Gay and merry they came from all quarters into the streets and cross-ways, and there published the life of each person, giving at the same time his name."

The festival of Bacchus was kept in the spring of the year by the husbandmen, and then it was that those satiric and comic strains first began to be sung in the fields. At this festival, we are told, it was an established custom with them to fill a goat's skin with wine, and pour oil on the outside of it, and then to hop with one leg upon it ; which, from the frequent falls they received, was a subject of great merriment to them. The goat was the usual victim in the sacrifices to Bacchus, that animal being an especial

enemy to the vine. The Roman poet, Virgil, in his second Georgic, thus alludes to this custom:—

For this the malefactor goat was laid
On Bacchus' altar, and his forfeit paid.
At Athens thus old Comedy began,
When round the streets the reeling actors ran,
In country villages and crossing ways,
Contending for the prizes of their plays ;
And glad with Bacchus, on the grassy soil
Leap'd o'er the skins of goats besmear'd with oil.
Thus Roman youth, derived from ruin'd Troy,
In rude Saturnian rhymes express their joy ;
With taunts and laughter loud their audience please,
Deform'd with vizards cut from barks of trees :
In jolly hymns they praise the god of wine,
Whose earthen images adorn the pine,
And there are hung on high in honour of the vine :
A madness so devout the vineyard fills :
In hollow valleys, and on rising hills,
On whate'er side he turns his honest face,
And dances in the wind, those fields are in his grace.
To Bacchus therefore let us turn our lays,
And in our mother tongue resound his praise.
Thin cakes in chargers, and a guilty goat,
Dragg'd by the horns be to his altars brought ;
Whose offer'd entrails shall his crime reproach,
And drip their fatness from the hazel broach.

CHAPTER XXII.

The earliest writers of comedy and tragedy—Crude state of the drama on its first appearance in Athens—The three great dramatic writers of Athens, *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*.

THE first writer of comedies of whom any account has reached us was *Susarion*, and of his works, whatever they might have been, only a few scattered verses, of little or no merit, have come down to us. The poetic art must have been in a very rude and imperfect state in his time, and the representation of plays must have been of the simplest and most inartificial character. After him appeared *Thespis*, who was the first composer of tragedies. The subject of his earliest essay was the conduct of *Alcestis* saving her husband from death by substituting her own life for his. The high and valorous achievements of kings and warriors and great men; their toils, sufferings, and reverses, constituted the staple subjects of the tragic Muse. No poor or common person was ever introduced into the domain of tragedy. Hence *Socrates* is represented to have observed to *Antistines*, when he saw the great and powerful put to death under the reign of the Thirty Tyrants, "Do you not regret that we have performed no great exploit in our lives?" *Horace* calls tragedies *lachry-*

mosa poemata, mournful poems, in allusion to the misfortunes, sorrows, and death which constitute their subject-matter. Solon, the Athenian legislator, forbade Thespis to act his tragedies, because they were only fruitless lying. And Horace, alluding to the origin and mode of exhibiting tragedies, says, "Thespis is said to have invented that species of the poetic art called tragedy, which had been unknown before his time, and to have carried his poems about in waggons, which were sung and acted by persons whose faces were anointed with the lees of wine." That the earliest poets sung and acted their own productions there cannot be the least doubt. The term ὑποκριτής is used indiscriminately by the Greek writers to signify either a poet or an actor. The scene of those ancient representations, as alluded to by Horace, was a waggon, which was drawn in the procession of the festival of Bacchus. In the front of the procession on those occasions there was carried a pot or vessel filled with wine, and a vine twig; this was followed by a person leading a goat; then came another carrying a basket of figs, and last of all the Phallus. At the extremity of the procession came the waggon, with the poets, who dealt their satires around upon the crowd, as well as upon each other. From this practice of the poets came the Greek proverbs, "to speak as if from the waggon," "to abuse as if from the waggon." Their faces on those occasions were smeared with oil, or with the lees of wine, and sometimes concealed with a mask or vizard worn over a woollen cap. The term "tragedy" is derived from τράγος, a goat, and ᾠδή, a song, the reward of the poet and singer

being a goat, which we must presume to have been of considerable value in those early times ; at least of much greater value than in our day ; for such a reward at the present time would be but little calculated to rouse the faculties of our poets, or to call forth the musical talents of our singers. Horace, in allusion to this custom, says, "*Carmine qui tragico vilem certavit ob hircum,*" he who contested in tragic song for the reward of a despicable goat. In their festivals in honour of the gods, therefore, and especially of the god Bacchus, the ancient Greeks exhibited the earliest specimens of what they called satire and comedy ; little indeed resembling the same species of composition which prevailed among them in later days, or that which has been produced in modern times. Their compositions of this kind were in fact but a string of rude, canting jests ; and their acting but uncouth and fantastic evolutions, low grimace, mimic tricks, and vile jugglery. In these absurd exhibitions, too, they were animated by a sort of rude music, to which they beat time ; and this was the origin of what was afterwards known as the chorus in their more regular plays. In this first stage of their dramatic performances the distinction between tragedy and comedy appears to have been unknown to them, for their most serious representations were mixed up with rude mockery and licentious petulance. Upon the introduction of the pure tragedy, however, they excluded from their performances the rude buffoonery of the Satyrs. But the audience being rather oppressed than amused by the solemn and awful gravity of the unrelieved tragic scenes, the introduction of something amusing was,

after a time, deemed necessary ; and accordingly the chorus of Satyrs was again brought in by Thespis. Horace refers to this circumstance in the following words : " The poet who first contended in tragic verse for the paltry prize of a goat, also soon after exposed to view wild Satyrs naked, and attempted to mix up jocularity with tragic gravity, because the spectator, enjoying the festive occasion, and excited with wine and licentious freedom, was to be amused with attractive shows and agreeable novelty." Thespis introduced but one actor on the stage, who relieved the chorus ; but Æschylus added another, and Sophocles a third. The tragedies of these two celebrated writers, as well as those of Euripides, were the crowning achievements of the Greek stage. These three poets may be regarded as the princes of tragic poetry. Æschylus invested the stage with elegance and grace, and introduced a decorous regularity and scenic propriety where disorder and confusion had reigned before. He is said to be the first who taught the painting of the scenes, which was afterwards brought to perfection by Sophocles. Before the time of Sophocles, the poet was the actor ; but he changed this custom in consequence of the badness of his voice, which prevented him from giving due effect to his own productions. He also introduced the custom of actors and dancers wearing white shoes, increased the number of the dancers from twelve to fifteen, and adapted his tragedies to the capacities of the actors. Euripides added still further improvements to the ancient drama. It was he who first set forth the argument of the fable at the commencement of the tragedy.

These were the three great tragic poets who elevated the Greek drama to a position of importance unknown at any previous period of history, and who made the stage an institution of greater weight and influence on the moral, political, and social condition of the people than any other which they possessed. They were, in fact, the great teachers of the people, the directors of the public morality, the promoters of wisdom, the advocates of justice, the apostles of liberty. And well was the spirit of their lofty mission exemplified in the answer of the poet who had been interrupted in the theatre, when he exclaimed, "I have come here to teach you, and not to be taught by you."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Public contests of the great dramatic poets for the prize of superior excellence—Stage actors, and chorus.

AT stated periods of the year, and at the celebration of certain public festivals, these great dramatic writers exhibited their poems to the people, in order to contest between them the prize of superior excellence, competent judges being appointed for that purpose. Plutarch gives an account of one of these contests. After the people had taken their places in the theatre, ten judges were chosen, consisting of Cimon, the celebrated Athenian general, and nine of his captains; the Archon, or Chief Magistrate, was usually the person who selected the judges, but on this occasion Aphepsion, who was Archon, deferred the selection to Cimon. The accustomed sacrifice having been offered, the judges were sworn; who proceeded to declare the victory in favour of Sophocles. Æschylus was so affected by his defeat on this occasion, and by one who was much his junior (for Sophocles was but a young man then), that he retired to Sicily, where he shortly afterwards died, and was buried at Gelas. From this account it would appear that the judges on those occasions were ten in number; but in the contest between comedians, the number was

but five. And whereas there was no interference on the part of the people with the judges in the case of tragedians, it was not so with respect to the writers of comedy: for when that comedy of Aristophanes, called the "Clouds," was undergoing the ordeal of the judges, the people were so much pleased with it that they forestalled the judicial decision, and, applauding the poet, proclaimed him conqueror.

There were three ranks of merit assigned to the competitors on these occasions—the first, the second, and the third; but in the case referred to, Aristophanes, by the united voices of the people, had the first rank assigned to him. But yet great danger attended this poetic rencontre; for if the recitation of a poem had failed to please the people, the author was pelted with stones, or hissed and hooted out of the theatre. Aristophanes alludes to these casualties where he says, *οὐκ ἐβάλλετο*, he was not pelted. We sometimes witness demonstrations similar to these latter in our modern theatres; but they are of rare occurrence, and never attended with any danger either to author or actor. The time of exhibition, as it has been already observed, was during the celebration of public festivals; that is, on those days devoted to the festivities in honour of Bacchus and of Minerva. On these occasions the poet often presented as many as four poems, the fourth being generally a satirical poem. Casaubon says, "It was the custom of the Greek tragic poets at Athens to present sometimes one poem, and sometimes more." In the scenic representation of those plays the chief stress of the action fell upon the chorus. These numbered twenty-four in comedy, and fifty in tragedy. They were

arranged in rows, called in Greek, *Stoichoi*, four being the number of rows in comedy, with six men in each row. Æschylus, upon the representation of his tragedy called *Eumenides*, increased the usual number of the chorus so much that the people became alarmed, and children and women actually fainted. In consequence of which the number was reduced by law, and limited to fifteen. They sometimes entered upon the stage by files of three, which was called *κατὰ ζυγὰ πάροδος*; and sometimes in ranks of five, which was called *κατὰ στοίχους*. When one entered alone, it was called *καθ' ἑνα*. The interlocutors were rarely more than three, but sometimes a fourth spoke; and sometimes the chorus supplied the place of a fourth actor. Their movements on the stage were either *strophai*, or *anti-strophai*; that is, they turned from the right hand to the left, or the contrary. The *epode* was when they stood still, which was at the end of the acts.

We have already noticed the great improvements which the three great tragic poets of Athens, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, effected in the drama. So immense indeed was the influence which their writings produced upon their countrymen, that in sorrow, in suffering, and in exile, they afforded them their greatest consolation. We are told by Plutarch that after the defeat of the Athenians in Sicily, some of them used to repeat verses out of the works of Euripides, and feel comforted. There were statues of brass erected to them in Athens, in order that their memory might be kept alive among the people, and their genius held forth as a stimulus, and a guide to the Athenian youth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Old and New Comedy—Excessive love of the Athenians for dramatic shows—Its injurious consequences to the public liberty.

THE enactment of comedies became very popular among the Athenians after the tragic Muse had, by the perfection which it achieved, created in the public mind a taste and admiration for scenic displays. "The old comedy," says Horace, "succeeded to these (the tragedies), not without much praise." The mention here made by the Roman poet of the old comedy implies a division of this species of representation into the old and the new. The first division, or the old comedy, was of a very simple and unpretending character in point of composition, and consisted merely of a burlesque representation of manners and actions. There was no acting, properly speaking; but the chorus went around the altar, dancing and singing rude and unpolished verses. Susarion was the inventor of this kind of exhibition; but it was improved by Cratinus, who brought upon the stage a system of representation more in accordance with the usages of the tragic drama, and which held forth the vices and the follies of the time to the ridicule and indignation of the public. Under the Democracy it

was permitted as lawful to lash the corruptions and dishonest practices of public officers, and the vicious habits and dissolute lives of private citizens, through the medium of the stage. The actors appeared under the names and personal appearance of those whom they desired to hold forth to ridicule and hatred; and thus the moral effect of this form of amusement and instruction was very powerful in checking the excesses of private citizens, and correcting the corrupt and wicked practices of men entrusted with the administration of public offices. When, however, the reign of Democracy had given way to that of Oligarchy, the license of the stage was immediately repressed; and we are informed that Eupolis, who wrote the comedy entitled "Baptæ," was cast into the sea and drowned, for having thus offended against the personal feelings and dignity of individuals. A law was even passed forbidding the use of real names in the representations of comedy; and thus the castigation of vice, ceasing to be personal, expanded into a general application. A still greater restriction of the province of the satire took place when the growing power of Alexander of Macedon began to impress itself upon the feelings and apprehensions of the Greek nations. The arguments of the plays then underwent an entire alteration; and instead of scenes descriptive of the vices and foibles of foreign peoples, and of the peculiarities and crimes of individuals in power and high station, the stage presented nothing but vague recitals from old poems, and pointless fables selected from worthless fragments of distorted history. And this it is which they designated by the

name of the New Comedy. To ridicule low and mean persons, to indulge in jibe and banter at their expense ; while every allusion to the weaknesses and follies and vices of the great and the powerful was carefully avoided ; this became the idle and fruitless occupation of the now depressed and trembling comic Muse. Between the Athenians and Romans there existed a wide disparity of opinion as to the propriety of appearing on the stage in the character of an actor. The former regarded the profession of an actor in an honourable light, while the latter deemed it disgraceful. "To appear upon the stage," says Æmilius Probus, "and to stand before the gaze of the populace, was among them" (the Greeks) "considered no disgrace ; which, however, among us" (the Romans) "is esteemed unbecoming, humiliating, and dishonourable." The stage was erected in the open air, and constructed of wood in the form of a scaffolding. There were no stone or brick buildings devoted to the exhibition of plays among the ancients. Those wooden structures were erected in the market-place, and furnished with seats for the accommodation of spectators. It would seem that at first the seats were given gratuitously ; but for the purpose of preventing disorder and confusion, and of establishing a proper decorum among the spectators, it was enacted by the Senate that the sum of two oboli should be paid for each seat. The Attic obolus was something more than a penny. Some writers say the price was a drachma, which was about seven pence. The name *theatron* was given to the stage from the circumstance of providing seats for the use of the

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spectators, *θέα* being the Greek word for seat. In consequence of this tax upon the seats of the theatre, which, though it appears small to us, was nevertheless of considerable amount at that time in Greece, the poor were unable to participate in these dramatic amusements ; whereupon Pericles, who was ambitious of popularity, procured a law to be passed whereby each person was to receive two oboli, the price of a seat, out of the revenue of the city. So much importance was attached to this privilege by the people, that when afterwards Apollodorus attempted to modify the law by providing that in cases of war and public danger these sums should be converted to military purposes, he was resisted ; and Eubulus, another seeker of popular favour, carried a law rendering it a capital offence for any person to imitate the conduct of Apollodorus by endeavouring to deprive the people of this privilege. Demosthenes, we find, was disposed to the views of Apollodorus ; but seeing the intensity of the popular feeling on the subject, he wisely desisted from pressing his views. It is said that the Athenians spent as much money in theatrical amusements as they did in defending and securing the independence and liberty of Greece. This excessive love of the drama, which, when restricted within moderate bounds, is one of the most exquisite sources of intellectual and moral enjoyment, conduces, when excessively and indiscriminately indulged, not only to a lavish waste of time and means, but to an obtuseness of the perceptive and moral faculties destructive alike of the highest enjoyment, and of that sensitiveness to the grand and beautiful in art, the

promotion of which constitutes the chief value of dramatic representations. As over-indulgence in the luxuries of the table is injurious to the health of the body, and leads to debility and decay ; so the moral and intellectual powers may be overstrained, weakened, and impaired by unlimited or excessive indulgence in the heterogeneous representations of the theatre. Selection, discrimination, and moderation, are essential elements in the condition necessary to derive essential benefit and pure pleasure from the performances of the stage. But this condition cannot be made available without a sound and liberal education, and the acquisition of that taste in the higher departments of the dramatic and histrionic arts which such an education alone can give. This licentiousness in the pursuit of the amusements of the theatre indulged in by the Athenians, contributed doubtless to their growing incapacity in the cause of their liberties, and to their final subjection to the Macedonian yoke. To this as a main cause, Justin, the Roman historian, attributes that catastrophe. Talking of Epaminondas, he says : " After his removal from among them, whom they were accustomed to emulate, falling into sloth and indolence, they poured out the public revenues, not as heretofore on their fleet and army, but on festivities and theatrical entertainments ; and they resorted to the theatres with the most distinguished actors and poets, repairing more frequently to the stage than to the camp, and esteeming versifiers and orators more than the commanders of armies. Then the public taxes wherewith soldiers and sailors were wont to be supported, began to be divided with the

city populace. Under which circumstances it came to pass that, while the Greeks remained idle and inactive, the Macedonian name, hitherto contemptible and obscure, rose into distinction."

The stage of the ancient Greeks may properly be regarded in the light of an appendage to their religious ceremonies; it was in fact from the commencement part and parcel of the religious ceremonial in honour of the god Bacchus, whose altar stood on one side of the stage. So that between the devotions and sacrifices which they paid to their multitudinous gods, and their attendance upon the representations of the drama which constituted so large a portion of their religious observances, the spirit and energy of the Athenian people must have been greatly reduced from that standard of efficiency so necessary to the defence of their country and its liberties against the unceasing efforts of a powerful and ambitious foe.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Athenians under the government of laws from the earliest period of their history—The various character of their laws—Solon their great Lawgiver.

THAT the Athenians were governed by laws from the earliest times, the writers of antiquity afford abundant evidence. In the reign of Theseus laws were established among them; and Plutarch informs us that when this monarch formed a confederation of the Attic people, constituting them into a democracy, he gave them the making of their own laws, reserving only to himself the power of making war, and directing the military operations of the Commonwealth; and also the guardianship of the laws. It was the custom of the ancients in remote times, before the introduction of letters, and of the art of writing, to commit their laws to memory, and sing them, lest they should fall into disuse and be forgotten. Such, Aristotle informs us, was the custom in his time among the Agathyrsi, a people who lived in the neighbourhood of the Scythians. This custom, too, prevailed among the Irish of former times, a people of whose very high antiquity the most conclusive evidence is afforded in the writings of the most trust-

worthy inquirers in the field of national genealogies, both ancient and modern.

The name given to the laws of the Greeks was νόμοι, which, as Cicero intimates, was derived from the word νέμω, to distribute, because *jus suum cuique tribuebatur*, every person had justice done him, or distributed to him through their medium. The rules of music, with reference to the keeping of time in singing and playing, were afterwards called νόμοι, that is, the laws of just distribution of sounds.

We are further informed that their various measures or songs, such as the Lydian, Hypolidian, Doric, Hypodoric, Phrygian, Hypophrygian, Ionic, and so on, were distinguished by letters of the alphabet. The laws of Draco are distinguished amongst ancient ordinances for their indiscriminate severity. They were called θεσμοί, which, according to Ulpian, means "legal precepts for the making of laws." Aristotle, however, calls them νόμοι, and says of them, that they were not worth remembering except for their severity. Herodotus calls them the laws not of a man, but of a dragon; in allusion to their savage barbarity; and Demades says, they were written not with ink but with blood. The punishments inflicted by those laws were of the severest kind, and with scarcely a distinction as to the nature of the offences punished. Death was assigned as the penalty in almost every case. Idleness, theft, sacrilege, and murder ranked in the same category, and were alike punished by death. Solon, the great law-giver of the Athenians, swept away the entire code of Draco, with the exception of the laws affecting

murder. He shaped his laws in accordance with what he conceived to be the general good ; neither infringing upon the just and rational rights of the higher classes, nor depressing the energies of the poor by contracting the scope of their legitimate influence, or depriving them of that weight in the social scale which was their natural inheritance. He steered fairly between the two opposing interests, and made the one lean upon the other for the mutual support of both, and the general benefit of the Commonwealth. Demosthenes bears testimony to the solicitude evinced by his laws for the power, security, and aggrandizement of the republic. Juvenal styles him "just ;" and Aristophanes designates him *φιλόδημον*, lover of the people. Independently of the learning and wisdom which he had acquired by incessant study at home, he fitted himself for his great work of national legislation by travelling into foreign countries, and furnishing himself with all the knowledge they could afford. Egypt seems to have been the chief centre of all the wisdom and learning of the time ; and thither he went to converse with its priests and eminent men, and store his mind with their various knowledge ; and most especially that which related to government and laws. "Aided by the judgment of the Egyptian priests," says a Roman writer, "he gave, through laws framed with just moderation, its greater stability to Roman jurisprudence."

Among the advantages of which his intercourse with the wise and learned of Egypt enabled him to avail himself, reference may be made to two laws which he

had brought thence, and which may be regarded as constituting the corner-stones of his new social fabric. These were, first—The custom of stated returns of the names and occupations of the people, which were made to the governors of provinces or jurisdictions; whereby if it should have appeared that any lived by fraudulent pursuits, or misrepresented their mode of living, they were liable to severe punishment, even to the penalty of death: second—The person of a debtor should not be made answerable for his debt. That both these measures were in a high degree calculated to promote the prosperity and independence of the State cannot be questioned, when we reflect on the evils which necessarily spring from idleness and fraud on the one hand, and from the suspension of industrious energy and exertion, which imprisonment for debt produces, on the other.

In the one case the fruits of honest exertion are wrenched by fraudulent idleness from the hands that should hold them; and in the other the field of common industry is deprived of a portion of the labour which should be engaged in its cultivation. In both cases the Commonwealth suffers, for the end and aim of a mutual brotherhood is defeated. This combination of the laws of Solon with the reserved portion of the laws of Draco, was called the Athenian Civil Law, according to Justinian, who in his Institutes says, "*jus quidem civile ex unaquaque civitate appellatur, veluti Atheniensium*," that is, the civil law is called after the name of each particular State, as that of the Athenians is called the Athenian Civil Law. They were engraven on tablets of wood,

called *ἄξονες*, and preserved in the Acropolis; from which copies of them were afterwards transferred to the Prytaneum by Phialtes, where even in the time of Plutarch some of them were to be seen. They were written in alternate lines from left to right, and right to left; not according to our mode of always beginning a line at the left hand, and ending at the right.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The written and unwritten laws of the Greeks—The Athenian statute laws—Mode of proceeding in the passing of laws.

THE Lacedemonians, unlike the Athenians, had no written laws ; but were governed by custom, or prescriptive usage. Thus the laws of the Greeks generally were divided into the written and the unwritten. "A law," says a certain writer, "is a written custom ; and custom is an unwritten law." So that custom among one portion of the Greeks was held as inviolable as the written law among another portion ; the difference between the two consisting in the liability of the one to be, in the progress of time, diverted from its original significance, and thus weakened in its application ; while the other remained immovable and intact in its letter. But besides these written laws of the Athenians, they had other laws called *ψηφίσματα*, decrees ; answerable to our modern statute laws, and holding the same relation to the common or civil law. The *psephismata*, or decrees, were of two sorts, as regarded their duration and force. The first were those which were passed by the Senate without a convocation of the people, and which were but of one year's duration. These were called *προβουλεύματα*, decrees of the Senate ; and were similar

to the edicts of the Roman Prætors, whose duration was also only for one year. The second class of decrees were those to which the people's consent was asked and given; and these extended beyond twelve months. The manner of proceeding in the enactment of decrees was this: The Senate sat in consultation on the propriety and necessity of adopting any particular measure. This measure was then written on certain tablets by officers called the Prytanes; followed by an announcement that the people were to assemble at a certain hour on a certain day for the purpose of taking it into consideration. This exposition of the measure was called *πρόγραμμα*. The people having accordingly assembled, and being, as was the custom, purified, the proposed decree was read, and either sanctioned or annulled by the popular voice. There was also an annual inspection of the laws, for the purpose of repealing such as might be deemed unnecessary or inapplicable to the circumstances of the times, and of enacting others, if deemed necessary. This took place on the eleventh day of July every year. After the crier, according to usage, had offered up prayers in the Assembly, the laws were read over in due order; those relating to the Senate taking precedence, then those concerning the Commonwealth, and lastly the laws concerning the Archons or chief magistrates. Then it was asked if the laws touching the Senate were sufficient; and so with respect to the other two branches. Should it be found expedient to abrogate any of the laws, such laws were passed over until the last of the three days of Convocation, when the Prytanes, appointed

for the revising of the laws, were to take them into consideration, they having been informed of the matter by the *Proedroi*, or presidents of the Assembly. There were five persons then chosen from amongst the people whose business it was to promote the abrogation of the specified laws. The *Nomothetæ*, or legislators chosen out of the Council of Five Hundred, then met, and after hearing the five advocates chosen by the people, decided either for or against the abrogation. Whenever any person wished to introduce a new law, he should first write it on a tablet; which was to be hung up to the public view in a certain conspicuous position some days before the legislative sessions, so that all the citizens might have an opportunity of reading it, and be prepared to vote for or against it when it was brought forward. The proposer of a new law was also bound to see that it was not in contravention to any existing one; and if so, that the existing law should be repealed: he was bound to this under the liability of coming within the scope of a writ termed *παρὰνομίας γραφή*, or transgression of the laws. This might happen not only when a law was introduced contrary to an existing one, but also when the law proposed was deemed contrary to the welfare of the State. In the latter case, however, the author was not liable to punishment unless objection was taken to his law within twelve months after its passing. On one such occasion we are told a senator was put to death. This method of securing the adoption of good laws was not unlike that which prevailed among the Locrians, where the person who came forward to pro-

pose a new law had a halter around his neck, so that in the event of the law not meeting the approbation of the people, he was immediately placed in the hands of the hangman.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The public meetings of the Athenians.—How those meetings were constituted ; and the subjects brought under discussion.

THE public meetings of the Athenians, called *Comitia* by the Romans, were held four times in the course of every thirty-five days. They were convoked by the Prytanes, who were chief magistrates selected for this purpose out of the Council of Five Hundred. The first of these meetings was held for the purpose of inspecting the conduct of magistrates, and of confirming them in their offices, or dismissing them, according as they incurred the pleasure or displeasure of the people. Other subjects of public interest were also discussed by this meeting, such as those relating to the confiscation of property, and to the management of hereditary possessions. In the second meeting matters of both public and private concern were discussed. In the third, audience was given to ambassadors, who were first obliged to deliver their letters to the Prytanes. And the fourth was appointed for the consideration of matters connected with religion and the service of the gods. These meetings were held respectively on the eleventh, twentieth, thirtieth, and thirty-third of the Prytanea, that is, of

the period of thirty-five days, during which the Prytanes ruled in rotation. These meetings were denominated *Κυρίαὶ Ἐκκλησίαι*, regular or fixed meetings, to distinguish them from *Σύγκλητοι*, which were casual meetings called together on sudden emergencies, such as the apprehension of war. We are informed by some of their poets and orators that great difficulty was sometimes experienced in getting the people to attend those public meetings; that they frequently disregarded the announcement of the crier, who, according to custom, passed along the streets summoning them to the meeting, and that force had to be resorted to in order to secure their attendance. One stratagem used for this purpose was to barricade all the streets except the one leading to the place of meeting, so as to prevent the people from moving in any direction save the one to which they were invited. Another was to pass a rope dyed with red clay across the market-place, with a man at each end hauling it along, and thus driving the people before them. Whoever got marked with the red paint or clay was subjected to a fine as a punishment for his disobedience to the call of the crier. The wares and merchandise exposed for sale in the market-place were also removed on such occasions, in order that the attention of the people might not be distracted from attendance at the meetings. If thunder and lightning, or a storm of any kind, or symptoms of an earthquake, or any unusual or fearful phenomena, occurred on the day of meeting, or when it was assembled, an adjournment to the next day immediately took place. When they met, however, and

the Senate was ready to sit, a sacrifice was offered at the entrance to the Council Hall, by a man appointed to that duty. This was called *Eisiteria*, and was an act of purification, whereby the Senate and people were made fit to enter upon their sacred functions. As soon as the Senators were seated, the crier made a prayer for the welfare of the people, and invoked a curse upon any one who should attempt to deceive either the people or the Senate. He then cried aloud, *τίς ἀγορεύειν βούλεται*; "who desires to speak?" One of the senators then rose from his seat, and delivered his opinions upon the particular points to be discussed; after which the other senators spoke in order. Then any person present might offer his opinions. It sometimes happened, however, that the Senate would debate among themselves without the intervention of the people, who on such occasions were excluded. The place of meeting stood upon a rock, and was thence called *Petra*. Those who attended the meetings were allowed pay, as Demosthenes informs us, that they might not suffer any damage from devoting a portion of their time to the public service.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Senate, or Council of Five Hundred.—Mode of their election.—Their oath of office.—The Judges, chosen from the body of the Senate.

PREVIOUS to the establishment of the Senate, or Council of Five Hundred, there was appointed, under the direction of Solon, a similar body of men, to sit in judgment on certain offenders against the Commonwealth. This, however, was not a fixed or permanent body, but was chosen temporarily, and consisted of three hundred men, selected for their wisdom and worth.

The great Council, which consisted at first of four hundred, that is, one hundred from each of the four tribes, was formed at a subsequent period. Their duty was to superintend the affairs of the Commonwealth, and to see that no public measure should be adopted without deep consideration and a due regard to the interests of the State. This body was afterwards, in the time of Clisthenes, that is, more than eighty years from its first establishment, augmented to the number of five hundred, by a new division of the people into ten tribes, from each of which fifty elders or senators were chosen. Aristotle distinguishes this body as *ἡ μέγιστη κύβη πάντων*, the

greatest Council of all. Any person under thirty years of age was not competent to become a member of the body, nor indeed to take a leading part in any public business. We find in Demosthenes the form of oath taken by the senators upon their admission into office. It is as follows :—" I will pronounce judgment according to the laws and decrees of the people of Athens, and of the Council of Five Hundred. I will not consent to become a tyrant myself, nor to promote the establishment of an Oligarchy. Neither will I give my sanction to any who would dissolve the Democracy of Athens by proposition or decree. I will not abolish personal proprietorship, or permit a division of the Athenian land or houses. I will not cause exiled men to be recalled, or such as are condemned. I will not drive from the city any person who has not offended against the laws and statutes of the Athenians and Council or Senate of Five Hundred, neither myself, nor will I permit any one else to do it. I will not appoint a magistrate who has not given an account of his former office, whether that was one of the nine Archons, or of the agents for the administration of sacred things, or of those chosen on the same day with the Archons, namely, ambassadors and assistants. Neither shall the same man be appointed to the same office twice, or to two in one year. I will not accept of gifts for judgments, neither directly myself, nor through any other person privately by fraud and deceit. I am not under thirty years old. I will treat both parties, plaintiff and defendant, alike. I will pronounce judgment with impartiality upon the subject brought before me. I swear by

Jupiter, Neptune, Ceres." An asseveration of fidelity to the terms of the oath was made in these words, "If I violate any of these, let myself and my house perish ; but if I keep them faithfully, according to the import of my oath, let us be happy and prosperous." There was another oath which they also took, of which some portions have come down to us ; such as "To ratify the laws of Solon ; to give counsel for the greatest advantage of the people : to advise according to the laws : not to commit to prison any Athenian who should give three sureties of equal amount ; except for treason, or conspiracy for the overthrow of the democratic government ; or buying custom ; or collecting public monies and not paying them into the treasury : to sit in the order assigned them by lot : and not to permit any person, except such as were banished, to be accused or imprisoned for what was passed." This last declaration was added after the expulsion of the thirty tyrants ; when Thrasyllus, with a view to the restoration of tranquillity, and to the establishment of mutual confidence and security among the citizens, had it adopted as a pledge of amnesty. The authority of the Senate extended to all subjects affecting the interests and welfare of the State—war and peace ; the imposition and abrogation of taxes ; the passing of laws affecting civil, military, internal and external concerns ; the superintendence and direction of municipal and religious affairs ; the collection and appropriation of the public revenues : in short, all matters similar to those embraced within the functions of constitutional parliaments at the present time, came under their autho-

rity and control. They were, as Demosthenes terms it, κύριοι ψήφων, the lords of public opinion. Their tenure of office was not during life, but only annual. Their mode of election was by ballot. Some time before the beginning of the month Hecatombeon, that is, before the eighth day of July in each year, the chief of each of the four tribes took down in writing the names of all the members of the tribe qualified to fill the office of senator. These were put into a vessel; and into another were put one hundred white beans together with a quantity of black ones. A name and bean were then 'drawn out at the same time, until all the white beans appeared; the names corresponding to which were those of the senators-elect for that year. After the division of the people into ten tribes, however, the number which each tribe was privileged to choose was only fifty; and consequently only the same number of white beans was put into the vessel. We find that it was formerly a custom among the people of the Republic of Venice to elect young noblemen under the age of twenty-five years to the rights of citizenship, pretty much after the same fashion. It was observed on the fourth day of December in each year; when the names of the young men were put into a vessel, which was placed before the Prince and his Council; in another vessel were put a corresponding number of little balls, the one-fifth part of which were washed with gold, and the remainder with silver. The names which corresponded with the gilt balls when drawn, were those of the successful parties. I have said that the competition took place between young noblemen

under the age of twenty-five years, because at that age they were all admissible by law to the rights of citizens. I may observe here, as I have already observed in a previous chapter, that the number of tribes into which the Athenian people were divided was not always limited to ten ; for in the lapse of time two more tribes were added, making the entire number twelve, and the number of the Council six hundred.

Out of this body of senators were selected the various judges ; but only such as were over sixty years of age. Now, though the trial of causes affecting both the State and individuals was within the province of the Senate and people, yet in very important and difficult matters where they could not come to an agreement, an appeal lay to the judges, whose decision was final. For they not only delivered judgment according to law ; but where the law was uncertain, or had taken no cognizance of particular offences, they substituted their own opinions, which had the weight and binding efficacy of law ; for, according to Aristotle, their office was *κύριον κρίνειν*, decisive in judgment. Five judges were selected out of every tribe ; that is, fifty out of all, or the one-tenth of the entire body of senators ; and these were to officiate in turn, according to lot, in the ten tribunals or law courts. The different courts were denoted by the first ten letters of the alphabet painted in red over the door ; and the judges were assigned their respective tribunals according to the letters they drew by lot. The accounts which the classic writers give us of the pay of the judges are certainly curious ; one writer

says that it was only an obolus, or about one penny farthing a day ; which, he says, was in time increased to three oboli, or about fourpence per day : this sum being paid at the close of each day, upon the judge presenting his wand or staff of office to the public officer whose duty it was to pay him.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The manner of bringing actions into Court.—Mode of procedure in the conduct of cases.—Time limited in regard of speeches made by plaintiff and defendant, or counsel in their behalf.

THE manner of proceeding of parties seeking redress in the courts of law would appear to be of a tedious and unsatisfactory character.

The party first applied to a magistrate (whose office it was to report to the Court), giving him a statement of his case in writing, briefly in these words—"I accuse such a person (giving the name) and cite him to the Court by such a person (naming the complainant himself, or some person who was to act for him)." The magistrate then inquired of the complainant if he had any witnesses, and if he would go on to a prosecution of the matter : and if answered in the affirmative, he gave authority to have the defendant summoned to appear. This was accordingly done, either by the plaintiff himself, or by a bailiff acting in his behalf. If the defendant was able to produce two acceptable sureties he was dismissed, to appear at a stated time. But sometimes a day was appointed for trial by both parties—it might be within a week or more of the citation ; and then if the defendant did not appear in person he was subject to what was

called a writ of refusal to come in and answer. The consequences of this writ might, however, be avoided by suing for what was termed a *μη οὔσα* in ten days after the issuing of the writ of *refusal to plead*. The *μη οὔσα* reversed the sentence arising from the absence of the defendant, who was condemned *indicta causa*, or without being heard; and the case was thus placed on its original footing. The defendant was then bound to plead within two months; otherwise the original sentence of the Court was to be *ra'fied*. It is well to observe here that he who brought another to court under a false accusation was liable to punishment under what was termed *ψευδοκλησίας δίκη*, or writ of false action. But to come to the matter under our immediate consideration: as soon as the parties commence to plead, the plaintiff draws up his charges together with the substance of the defendant's answer, which he puts into court. We are informed that the origin of this form of pleading is to be found in the fact, that it was usual in Athens for wicked and evil-minded men to make charges out of a spirit of malice and envy; and therefore it was deemed expedient, as well as just, that the defendant should be made acquainted with the number and nature of the charges that were to be urged against him, in order that he might be in a position to prove their falsity, or justify his conduct by sufficient evidence. And further to obviate the evils arising from false impeachments, a law was enacted imposing a penalty of 1000 drachmas upon an accuser who had not a fifth part of the voices of the judges with him; and also punishing with a certain amount of fine the defendant who was unable

to prove the statements set forth in his defence ; which fine was increased fourfold if not paid at the time specified by the Court, and if unable to pay, he was to be punished by imprisonment. After the answer of the defendant was put in, which was by the Greeks termed *ἀντιγραφή*, proofs were also put in on the other side, together with the copy of an oath made by the plaintiff, consisting of the words *τάληθῇ κατηγορήσειν*, that he would make a just accusation ; and of another made by the defendant in the words *τάληθῇ ἀπολογήσασθαι*, that he would make a just defence.

This practice of counter-affidavits was termed *antimosia*. All these documents were put into a box, to be used according as occasion required.

These preliminaries having been arranged, the parties were admitted into court, the plaintiff being first asked if he would follow up the suit, and if he had sufficient testimony, or, if it was a capital cause, whether he required any witness who could not then be present.

Should there have been anything wanting necessary to promote the suit, an adjournment of the trial took place, upon oath by the plaintiff to the effect that for the present he could not go on with it, but that he would certainly do so at another time. There were various causes, independent of the absence of necessary witnesses, which would be deemed sufficient for the postponement of a trial, such as indisposition, death of friends or of relatives, or urgent business of any kind connected with the security of the family, person, or property of the party. When, however, all things were ready, the parties appeared before the Court, and

the case was proceeded with ; the judges first swearing that they would pronounce sentence according to the laws, and where the laws were deficient, according to conscience and equity ; and that in doing so they would keep within the subjects under investigation. This oath would seem to have been taken at the altar from which they brought the small stones or pebbles with which they delivered their opinions ; as Plutarch says, *ψῆφον ἀπὸ βωμοῦ φέροντες*, bringing the sentence-stone from the altar.

They then returned to their seats, which were covered with mats, called *psiatha*. This word *psiatha* cannot fail to attract the attention of an Irishman, or of any person acquainted with the Irish or Gaelic language ; for it must at once remind him of a word in that language similar to, if not identical with it, and signifying the same thing. The peasantry of Ireland make (or at least used to make) very general use of a sort of chair or seat made of straw, and sometimes of hay, which they call *siastha*.

Now this word is in sense the same as the Greek one, and in sound and orthography nearly the same ; the only essential difference being the addition of the letter *s* to the first syllable of the Irish word. This identity (for I must call it so), and between words, too, expressive of such a peculiar article of domestic use, is entitled to far deeper consideration, and carries with it a much wider significance, than the accidental coincidence of words and sounds in different languages would always justify or suggest.

But all this is foreign to our present purpose. The judges having taken their seats on the bench, and the

crier having ordered all persons not having immediate business in court to withdraw behind the bar, in the words *μετάσθητε ἔξω*, the indictment, which was called *enkima*, was read by the crier. We find, in Plutarch's account of the early days of Demosthenes, that when he was desirous of hearing the celebrated orator, Callistratus, plead before the judges in the case of Oropus, he entreated his preceptor to bring him where he could gratify his curiosity; and that his preceptor, being acquainted with the officers who guarded the doors, procured him, through them, a place where he might hear without being seen. It was also customary for the crier, as soon as the judges took their seats, to cry out, *Εἰ τις θύραισιν ἡλιαστής, εἰσίτω*, "If any judge be outside, let him enter." This was in consequence of the established usage of not admitting any judge after the commencement of trial. After the reading of the indictment the crier handed up to the Court the written charges against the defendant, with the various circumstances in which they were involved, and the estimated damages which were sought to be recovered. Of these the judges took down the heads in writing, in order that the parties should be kept within the precise points in debate.

The accuser or plaintiff then proceeded to address the Court from a platform or pulpit on the left of the bench, urging his various charges against the defendant in a set speech, which was usually prepared for him by one of the Attic orators. He was limited as to time in his delivery of this speech, the length of which was to be measured by the running out of the *κλεψύδρα*, which was a vessel containing a certain

quantity of water, with a hole at the lower extremity through which the water poured out : time being measured by this instrument in the same way as by our sand or hour glass. An officer was appointed to superintend this vessel, that is, to pour the water into it, and give an equal measure to plaintiff and defendant. As soon as the water had run out, which circumstance was announced by the *ἐφύδωρ*, or superintendent, the speaker had to stop. Great economy was therefore observed in the management of the speech ; and whenever it became necessary to recite a law, it was allowable to stop the flowing of the water, so that the space permitted to the argument should not be infringed upon by the recital of laws adduced in support of it. If the speaker, however, should have finished his argument before the vessel was exhausted, he might permit any person else to speak for the remainder of the time ; otherwise he directed the crier to empty it out. From this practice of measuring the time of speaking, it became a common observation to say, *πρὸς τῇ κλεψύδρῳ*, or, as we would say, " speaking by the clock."

CHAPTER XXX.

Witnesses; and the nature of the evidence given—Judicial decisions; their form of delivery, and character.

As soon as the accuser had concluded his discourse, the defendant, who sat on the opposite or right side of the bench, and who was closely intent upon the charges urged against him, rose; and from a similar platform or pulpit to that of the accuser, addressed himself to his answer; the *κλεψύδρα*, or water vessel, having in the meantime, been replenished and set in motion. The defence was confined to a direct rebuttal of the charges made, which was to be done by the weight of probabilities, the deductions of reasoning, or the testimony of witnesses. It is proper that I should here observe that it was optional with the parties to retain paid advocates, if they were so inclined: these were called *συνηγόρους*. Witnesses were examined on both sides in the course of the trial; who, after having delivered their testimony, went in succession to the altar, and swore in confirmation of the truth of their statements. Cicero informs us of a most interesting instance of the high estimation in which upright conduct and a virtuous life were held among the Greeks. It occurred in the case of Xenocrates, who, having on a certain occasion delivered his testimony

in court, was advancing towards the altar to make the usual oath, when the judges all cried out that he should not swear, his honourable and upright character being to them a stronger proof of the truth of his statements than any appeal to religion. When Pericles was asked by his friend to swear to something which was not true, he replied that he was his friend as far as conscience, honesty, and truth permitted; but no farther. Hence arose a saying common amongst the Greeks, ἄχρι βωμὸν φίλος εἰμί, "I am your friend as far as the altar." It would seem that when the witnesses were called on for their testimony, the person they were to testify for was wont to touch the top of their ears, in order to revive their attention, and recall their memory to the facts to which they were expected to attest. This was also a Roman custom, as we find in Horace and Virgil. Pliny says that the region of memory lies in the depth of the ear, and that therefore it was touched in order to procure its testimony. If a witness swore to that which was not true, he was indicted under a writ of false testimony, called *ψευδομαρτυριῶν*; and the person suborning a witness was subject to a writ of *κακοτεχνία*, a fraudulent procurement of evidence. Hearsay evidence was not admissible in the Athenian courts, unless the person from whom the information had been received were dead; in which case it was allowable. The evidence of persons deprived of the freedom of the city, who were called *ἄτιμοι*, degraded persons; or of slaves; or of any man in his own cause; was not admissible. The form of evidence was twofold, that is, oral and written. In

the latter case—that is, when the evidence was given in writing—the witness was liable to an action of attachment by the person against whom he witnessed, if his statements were not true.

Well, both parties having been heard through themselves and their witnesses, the crier ordered, That such of the judges as were satisfied that the accused party was guilty, should cast in the black stone; but such as were of a contrary opinion, the white stone. Thus, in expressing their individual opinions, the judges were not called upon to do so in words, but merely by dropping a black or white pebble into a box or vessel, according as they were for the condemnation or acquittal of the prisoner, or party accused; the black stone signifying condemnation, and the white one acquittal. To this custom Ovid alludes in the verses,—

Mos erat antiquis niveis atrisque lapillis :
His damnare reos, illis absolvere culpa.

It frequently happened that some of the judges, either from indifference or a desire to favour the accused, delayed to put in his pebble or ball of brass (for brass balls were in the progress of time substituted for the pebbles or stone balls), and then the crier, who went round with the vessels, would exclaim: Τὶς ἀψήφιστος, ἀνιστάθω, “Whosoever has not voted, let him rise.” Whereupon such as had not already voted then rose and dropped in their balls. The counting of the balls next followed; and if the white outnumbered the black, the accused was acquitted, or *vice versa*. If the party accused were found guilty, the accuser or plaintiff wrote down the damages for which

the defendant was liable ; for it was customary with litigant parties, previously to their going to trial, to enter into an agreement, by which certain conditions were specified in relation to the compensation to be made by the defeated party. In trials for capital offences two sentences or judgments were delivered : first, as to the guilt or innocence of the party ; and second, in the case of guilt, as to the punishment to be awarded. But if the first sentence happened to be one of acquittal, the party acquitted was permitted to fine himself ; which, if not done adequately, or to the satisfaction of the Court, the judges themselves made an addition to the penalty. It appears that in cases of a capital charge, if the prisoner was acquitted of the actual crime—that is, was not deemed deserving of death—he was nevertheless liable to a punishment by fine, which it was left to himself to impose under the condition I have mentioned.

In the account which has come down to us of the trial of Socrates, we learn that there was a majority of 280 votes against him in the first decision, or judgment, that is, the sentence pronounced with respect to his guilt or innocence ; and in the second judgment, or the sentence regarding the punishment, the majority rose to 361. This sentence, as all classical readers are aware, was that he should die by being compelled to drink a decoction of hemlock.

When the numbers of white and black balls were the same, that is, when the judges were equally divided, the prisoner was acquitted ; but a majority of one would be decisive at either side. Thus we find that Cimon, the son of Miltiades, escaped conviction on a capital charge by only three balls.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Influences brought to bear on the Judges in the formation of their decisions—Judges sometimes corrupt.

IN pleading it was usual with the prisoner to have recourse to every means within his power, with the view of swaying the decisions of the judges. He appealed to their humanity and clemency; he recalled to their memory his own deeds, and those of his ancestors in defence of the liberties of Greece: he exposed to them the wounds he had received in battle, and detailed the various fields in which he had distinguished himself; and the numerous trophies which he had aided to win: he referred to the estimation in which his country had hitherto held him; and implored them to balance his present error by the weight of his former worth. Even he brought his aged parents to plead for him by their silent tears and caresses, or by their tremulous and supplicating voices. From scenes like these the judges were sometimes affected even to tears; and we find Aristophanes sneeringly alluding to one of them, whom he represents on a certain occasion as "drowning his sentence in tears." These exhibitions on the part of the accused were accompanied with the usual effects on the minds and feelings of the judges; that is, they sometimes softened them to mercy; and sometimes, on the contrary, they only incited them to indigna-

tion ; for they were frequently resorted to by persons of the most indefensible character, and from the most transparent motives of deception. But, as I have said, they were sometimes effective in awakening the sympathy of the judges ; for we find that when *Æschylus*, the tragic poet, was on his trial in consequence of having introduced into one of his plays some scenes which were deemed of impious tendency, his brother *Amynias* came into court, and held up his arm, destitute of the hand which he had lost in the battle of *Salamis* : this appeal had its intended effect, for the judges, recalling to mind the merits of *Amynias*, admitted their weight in the opposing scale against the brother's offence, and dismissed the poet. Still the classic writers afford us abundant evidence of the partiality and the unworthy considerations which often influenced the proceedings and decisions of those Courts : " They decided," says *Xenophon*, " not so much for the cause of justice, as for their own private interests."

The prolongation of suits, and the delay of justice, appear also to have been subjects of complaint among the ancient Greeks. In short, the propensities of human nature, good and bad, especially its ruling principle of self-interest, are as apparent in the conduct and proceedings of our brothers of former and remote times as they are at the present day among ourselves. The civilization of modern ages has doubtless effected great and important changes for the amelioration of man's condition, and the advancement of his higher faculties ; but the original bent of his nature is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Court of the Areopagus—The time of its foundation—The qualifications and character of its Judges—Mode of procedure of this Court.

THE principal, or Supreme Court in Athens was the Areopagus, which stood upon the hill on which the Acropolis was built. The name Areopagus was given to this court from the circumstance of the height on which it was erected having been dedicated to Mars, the god of war: *Ἄρης* being the name of that god in the Greek tongue, and *πάγος* the name for hill. Areopagus, then, means literally the hill of Mars. There was a superstitious belief among the Athenians that the god Mars had been tried upon this hill by the twelve gods of Greece, for the murder of the son of Neptune. *Ἄρειος ὄχθος* is the name given to it by Euripides; which, however, signifies the same thing, *ὄχθος* being another name for hill or mound. It was usual with the ancients to consecrate elevated grounds to their deities, and to erect thereon the statues of those deities; thus we find that Neptune, Jupiter, Saturn, Mercury, Pan, had each their hills in Athens, which were designated by their names. Neptune's hill was called *Ποσειδῶνος πάγος*; Saturn's, *Κρόνου πάγος*; Mercury's, *Ἑρμοῦ πάγος*; and so of the rest. The derivation of the Areopagus, or hill of

Mars, is made by some writers differently from that which I have given ; for instance, *Æschylus* says that it was so called from the circumstance of the Amazons having offered sacrifices to Mars upon it, on the occasion of their attacking *Theseus* ; and another writer ascribes its name to the bloodshed caused by the execution of criminals tried and convicted there. These opinions, however, are of little consequence ; it is only necessary for us to know that it was called *Areopagus* because it stood upon the hill dedicated to Mars, without puzzling the mind as to when or why the hill was so dedicated. This court, as I have said, was the supreme judicial tribunal of the Athenians ; in the integrity of which they had the utmost confidence ; and from whose decisions there was no appeal. Of its exact administration of the law and of justice ; of its vigilance in the detection and punishment of crime ; of its zeal, honesty, and ability in the discharge of its high functions ; of its wisdom and incorruptible integrity, various ancient writers speak in the most decided and unqualified terms. The precise period at which it was first established we have no accurate means of ascertaining, as the Greek writers themselves are at variance on this point. *Plutarch* informs us that *Solon* was its original founder ; and *Cicero*, the Roman orator and writer, gives us the same information. Others, however, are of opinion that it had been in existence before the time of *Solon* ; and that he merely enlarged its jurisdiction, and increased its weight and influence by the infusion of greater wisdom, experience, learning, and wealth into its composition.

Indeed Plutarch himself would seem to warrant this opinion where he speaks of the eighth law of the thirteenth table ; that code drawn up by Solon for the government of Athens, in which it is provided that they who had lost their liberties should have them restored to them again, *unless they had been condemned for murder, or robbery, or an attempt to usurp the government, by the AREOPAGITES, Ephetae, or the kings in the Prytaneum.* Plutarch disposes of the difficulty here presented, by saying : " This shows that before Solon was chief magistrate, and proclaimed his laws, the Council of Areopagus was in existence ; for, who could have been condemned in the Court of Areopagus before the time of Solon, if he himself was the first who had established it ? Unless, perhaps, there be some obscurity or deficiency in the text, and the meaning be, that such as have been convicted of crimes that are now cognizable by the Areopagites, Ephetae, and Prytanes, shall continue excluded, while others are restored to honcur." On the whole, I am inclined to the opinion that the Court of the Areopagites was not originally founded by Solon, but only remodelled, and brought to a higher state of respectability and efficiency by his judgment and wisdom. The members of this body were alike distinguished for wisdom and the purity of their lives ; in fact, none were admissible except such as were exalted above their fellow-citizens in wisdom and virtue, as well as in point of family and wealth ; for they consisted only of those who had borne the office of Archon or chief magistrate. Of the exact number of which the body consisted we have no reliable account. Some say it

was but nine ; others, fifty-one, which is the more probable. They continued in office for life, unless convicted of some great offence. Their authority extended to every crime and misdemeanour committed in the State ; for they were the supreme guardians and vindicators of the laws. They even inquired into the private lives of the citizens ; and put a check upon idleness, licentiousness, and all evil and immoral practices. We have a curious instance, given us by Demosthens, of the manner in which the Athenians sometimes indulged their vicious propensities ; it is of a man who went to a surgeon to get an incision in his head, in order that he might go to the Court of the Areopagites and lodge an action for battery against a person whom he disliked, and thus get him banished from Athens. To show the estimation in which this Court was held, not only by the Greeks themselves, but also by the Romans, it is only necessary to refer to the observation of Cicero on this subject : " If any one," he says, " should be of opinion that the Attic Republic can be well governed without the Council of the Areopagites, he might as well believe that the world may be governed without the providence of the gods." It was by their advice and influence that the Greeks rose in defence of their liberties when the Medes and Persians carried war into their territories ; and it was by their liberality and exertions that the Athenian fleet was equipped and manned at a time when the public treasury was empty. Their zeal and public spirit in the cause of their country, coupled with the pervading influence of their wisdom and private worth,

which was still enhanced by the weight and splendour of their titles and honours won by their long public services, gave a vigour and impetus to the patriotism of the people which nothing could resist. All offences, too, committed against religion and the gods, and the sacred mysteries came within the sphere of their jurisdiction ; for they were alike the overseers and defenders of the temporal and spiritual concerns of the Commonwealth. The mode of procedure in this Court of the Areopagus was as follows :—After the commission of a felony the accuser or appellant preferred his indictment to one of the nine Archons, who was called the *Βασιλεύς*, or king. This magistrate gave audience to both parties, the accuser and defendant, three times, that is, once a month for three months, they debating before him the matter at issue. In the fourth month he brought the accusation before the Court of the Areopagus ; and divesting himself of the crown, which he usually wore by virtue of his office, he took his place among the judges. The Court was held at night, and in the dark, in order, as we are told, that the judges might not be influenced by sympathy with the feelings of the speakers, but only by the substantial matters urged upon their attention. For it was not permitted to advocates in this court to have recourse to rhetorical artifice of any kind for the purpose of moving the judges to compassion. Aristotle calls this mode of address “speaking beside the matter.” As soon as the parties made their appearance in court, they were sworn, standing in a certain position ; the nature of the oath being, that if the party taking it did not declare that

which was true, he wished that his family, himself, and his posterity might be extirpated. If, however, either party committed perjury, he was not punished for it, inasmuch as it was a general belief among the ancients that perjury was specially avenged by the gods. Each party was then placed upon two silver stones called respectively λίθος ὑβρεως, the stone of injury, and λίθος ἀναίτιας, the stone of innocence. The complainant then put three questions to the accused; first, as to whether he was guilty or not guilty? second (supposing the answer to the first question to be in the negative), for what reason he had committed the crime? and third, who were his accomplices? The proceedings having gone thus far, the ἐξηγηταί, or lawyers, arose to plead for the defendant; for we find that on important occasions, and when matters of difficult handling were to be treated, paid advocates were resorted to by the accused. The business of the ἐξηγηταί, or pleaders, was, in a case of murder for instance, to justify the act, under the approbation of certain laws which under certain specified circumstances rendered murder no crime. The aim of the advocate, therefore, was to prove that the murder charged against the defendant was committed σὺν δίκῃ, justly. If a man in defence of his property, or goods, caused the death of the aggressor, he was regarded as innocent under the Athenian laws. This is the law, at the present day, in all the civilized parts of the world. At the conclusion of the pleading the sentence of the Court was delivered; not *viva voce*, but by secret signs, or marks, something in the manner of the Roman judges; who, when the

sentence was one of condemnation, wrote the letter C ; when of acquittal, the letter A ; and when doubtful, the two letters N L ; the initials respectively of the words *condemno*, *absolvo*, *non lucet*. If the sentence was one of condemnation, its execution took place immediately, except in cases where delay became necessary for the protection of innocence ; as in case of a woman *enceinte*, whose life was spared until after the birth of the child. This, too, is the custom of the present day. History records a curious instance of this kind, that is, of deferring the execution of a criminal, lest innocence might suffer. It is related that when Dolabella was proconsul of Asia, a married woman of the isle of Smyrna had been brought before him under the charge of having murdered her husband and son, who had deprived her of a promising youth whom she had by a former husband. Dolabella referred the matter to the judges of the Areopagus, who decided that the woman and her accuser should appear before the Court in about a hundred years thence, when the matter should be finally determined. The design of this judgment was to show that the Court was unwilling either to acquit or condemn the criminal under the circumstances, so scrupulous and conscientious did they feel in the discharge of the awful and solemn duties with which the State had entrusted them. Their periods of sitting were tri-monthly, that is, they sat three several days in each month ; when all causes of vital importance connected with the general welfare of the Commonwealth were, as has been already said, committed to their decision.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Court of the Palladium, and other courts established in Athens—Their various jurisdictions.

THERE was another court, distinct from any I have mentioned, established in Athens, called the Court of the Palladium. This was for the trial of murders committed by mistake or by accident. The origin of this court we find to be this. When Diomedes, after the siege of Troy, was returning with his followers to Argos, he arrived at a port of Athens called Phalerum ; and here, supposing that they had touched at an enemy's country, they landed and commenced to make booty. The Athenians, under the conduct of Demophon, attacked and slew several of them, whose bodies were left unburied. Having afterwards discovered that they were Greeks, which was proved by their having with them the Palladium or image of Minerva, they consulted the oracle, and according to its direction they buried the bodies, and consecrated the place to the goddess Minerva, and established a court there. Demophon is said to have been the first who was tried in this court, for having killed with his horse an Athenian, just after his returning from the slaughter of the Argives. It being only for accidental murder that trials were had in this court, the punish-

ment was but temporary exile, and not *δειφυγία*, as in wilful felony. It was also customary with the accused in such cases to pay a sum of money to the relatives of the murdered person, in order to avoid the penalty of exile; but in case of its being refused, they were obliged to leave the city for a period of twelve months, at the end of which they were permitted to return. This money was called by the Greeks *ποινή*, that is, blood-money. If the injured man previously to his death, or his relatives afterwards, forgave his murderer, no punishment ensued. It was the custom, that when an offender of this kind was going into exile, he went to the house of an acquaintance in order to undergo the ceremony of purification or cleansing from his guilt. In the course of this ceremony sacrifice was also offered, as Demosthenes informs us. The mode of procedure of this court was pretty much the same as that followed in the other courts of Athens, already referred to; namely, the parties first made oath, then addressed the judges in turn, after which sentence was given.

Another court was established at Delphinium, where stood a temple dedicated to the god Apollo, and the goddess Diana. This court was devoted to the hearing of cases of murder where the accused party confessed the crime, but pleaded justification. The Athenians, as has been said before, justified murder committed under certain circumstances, as in defence of one's property, or of the honour of his wife, mother, daughter, and so forth. Theseus was the first who was tried here for the murder of certain thieves and rebels. Before this trial of Theseus any person committing

murder under any circumstances was compelled to fly from the country, or be tried and suffer death.

The Prytanium was another tribunal in which inanimate things only were brought under judicial investigation. If a man came by his death by a blow from a stone, or a piece of wood, or iron, or any other thing, the sentence of the Court was passed upon it; and care was taken by its chief officers that the convicted object should be cast out from the Athenian territory.

The Phreattus was another court, which stood in the Pyræus, and where a particular class of felons were tried, namely, such as had fled from their own country for wilful murder, and who during their exile had been guilty of a similar crime. The form of trial in these cases was of a curious character. The judges assembled *en phreattoi*, that is, on the sea coast; and the accused approached the shore in a boat, without, however, landing or even casting anchor, or mooring his boat; if he were found guilty, due punishment was inflicted upon him, which, according to some writers, consisted of his being driven out to sea, and exposed to the mercy of the winds and waves; if he were not found guilty, he was acquitted of the offence for which he had been tried; while the former crime which had caused his exile remained untouched. The first person of whom mention is made as having been tried in this court was Teucer, for the death of Ajax. He was acquitted. It would appear from a passage in Aristotle that strangers who had fled for murder appealed to this court, with the view of being restored to their own country.

Besides these criminal courts there were courts for the trial of civil causes ; such as the *Heliaia*, or Senate of Five Hundred, already described ; the *Parabuston*, whose jurisdiction was limited to sums not exceeding one drachma, and which stood in an obscure part of the city ; the *Trigonōn*, so called from its shape, which was that of a triangle ; the *Batrachioun*, and *Phoinikioun*, so called from the respective colours painted on the entrance posts of each, and several others : making altogether ten courts ; that is, five of criminal and five of civil jurisdiction. But besides this extensive apparatus provided for the redress of wrongs, and the arrangement of differences between man and man, there was a court of arbitration ; that is to say, it was competent for parties litigant to refer their disputes to arbitrators appointed by each ; and by whose decision they bound themselves to abide, even as the custom is among ourselves.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Writs, or forms of action issued by the Courts of Athens—

Writs were of two kinds, public and private—Of public writs.

FROM what has been said, it will be at once seen that from the foundation of our own civil and criminal jurisprudence, and of that of the civilized world, the spirit, if not the precise form of the administration of justice, has been followed to the present day. The writs or forms of accusation issued by the Athenian courts were of two kinds, public and private. Of public writs there were various kinds; all of which were termed *Κατηγορίαι*, which means simply charges or accusations. The writ called *γραφή* involved a general charge of trespass against the law, that is, when any offence was committed against the law, the *γραφή* was issued; and the person against whom it was issued was said to be *served with a writ*. It is supposed to be the same as that which in this country is called a writ of right. Another description of writ was the *Φάσις*, which was issued in cases of peculation of any kind, such as converting the public taxes to one's private use. Cases of this description were brought before the Archon, with the names of the accuser and accused,

and the fine to be levied in the event of conviction, which was to be paid to the party injured. But should the informer, or party complaining, not obtain, upon the hearing of the case, a fifth part of the votes of the judges, he was himself compelled to pay a sixth part of the fine set down. This is called by Demosthenes *ἐπωβελία*. The writ in such cases contained also the names of the witnesses present at the time when the act of peculation was committed. In general the writ of *Φάσις* was employed for the purpose of redressing any private injuries, and answers to the Latin term *delatio*. Among the Romans the fourth part of the fine or forfeit was allotted to the informer, who on that account was called *quadruplator*. The writ of *Ἐνδειξις* was that which was taken out against persons who were indebted to the City Treasury, and who at the same time bore office, which was contrary to the Athenian law. There is, however, a difference of opinion among the Greek writers as to the true application of this writ: some referring it to all cases of wrong committed in the discharge of public affairs; while others speak of it as being brought against persons who were disfranchised. The writ of *Ἀπαγωγὴ* was for the purpose of bringing before the magistrate a man who was taken in the fact. This writ was made returnable not to any particular magistrate, but to such as had special jurisdiction over the particular offence committed; so that it was sometimes brought to the Archon, sometimes to the Thesmothetai, and sometimes to others. Under this writ it was not usual for the accuser to bring the magistrate to the house or place where the

offending party lay concealed in order to his arrest. This would occur either when the accuser was influenced by fear of personal danger in the attempt to make the arrest, or when the party to be arrested was suspected to be about leaving the city, or from some other reasonable cause. A writ of *Ἀνδρολήψιον* was that which was issued in cases of murder, when the offender was concealed by a friend who refused to give him up to the relations of the murdered person; this form of writ was then issued to compel the surrender of the guilty party, or otherwise to arrest any three persons belonging to the house in which he was concealed, who were to be answerable for his crime. An unjust entrance into any house for this purpose was, however, punishable by the laws. The *Εἰσαγγελία* was an unwritten form of accusation provided for high State offences, such as an attempt to undermine the Commonwealth, to excite to sedition, to betray a garrison, or an army, or a fleet. The informer in this instance was not punishable by fine or otherwise if he did not make good his charge, as under other forms of writ. This, it should be observed, was originally the case; but afterwards, in consequence of persons being liable to charges of this kind from malicious motives, the informer was made punishable by a fine of one thousand drachmas if he had not a fifth part of the votes of the judges with him; but he was not deprived of his privileges as a citizen. This form of accusation, as has been observed, was not written, that is, the crime charged was not set forth in writing; it was merely made by word of mouth. The Senate took cognizance

of accusations of this kind ; and the punishment, if the offence was trivial, was a fine ; but if heinous, imprisonment. Such were the forms of public actions, or, as the Greeks called them, *Κατηγορίαι*.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

Private actions; and the various subjects they embraced—
Comprehensive character of Grecian law.

PRIVATE actions were called *Δίκαι*, and, like the others, were of different kinds. There was the *Ἀδικίας*, which was an action against the person who gave the first blow in a row or scuffle. Although the law allowed no fixed sum of money for damages in such cases, yet the complainant was permitted to set down whatever amount he thought proper, the judges controlling the sum according to the circumstances of the case. There was also a form of private action called *Κατηγορία*, which was for offensive or reproachful words, such as giving the lie, and so forth. This was doubtless for the prevention of quarrelling, for offensive words lead to blows. The form of action designated *Βλάβης*, was for the redress of injury done to the property or private interests of individuals, such as to turn water upon a man's land; to refuse to pay money when due, or to give it to a third party; to promise to give testimony in a suit, and yet to be absent at the time of trial, thereby causing the loss of the suit, and so on. The action of *Παρακαταθήκη* related to pawnbrokers and usurers; and that of *Ἀποπομ* to divorces, which would appear to have

been of frequent occurrence among the Athenians. The *Κάκωσις* was an action for ill-treatment of parents ; that is, this form of action was brought by parents against their children for not relieving them when oppressed by poverty ; also by wives against their husbands, and pupils against their tutors. *Κλοπή* was the name of the action for theft ; which, if committed by night was punishable by death ; but not so if committed by day. The action *χρέους* was for extortion, according to an Athenian law which provided against overcharges for goods or money. Solon had once permitted that any person might make the best use of his money, which he called *στάσιμον ἀργύριον* ; but this unlimited permission to gain was afterwards restricted. The action *Συμβολαίων δική* was for the violation of the terms of a bargain. The *Συνθήκας παραβάσεως*, or violation of articles, was when agreements for the division of inheritances between man and man, or of commercial intercourse between city and city, were broken. Of the latter kind was the stipulation of commercial reciprocity between the Carthaginians and Romans. These agreements were generally confirmed by oath made by each to the other. The *Ἐπιδικασία* was when daughters inherited property from their parents, and their relatives disputed as to who were nearest in blood to them, in order to be united with them in marriage. Hence a young woman to whom an inheritance had fallen was termed *ἐπιδίκος*, that is, disputed. There was a form of action relating to the letting of houses. It was taken against the guardians of orphans who neglected to let, or obtain sufficient rent for the

houses left for the education and support of orphans. It was usual in Athens to place a notice over the doors of houses that were to be let; such as, "This house is to be let," as is the custom with us to-day. Another form of action had relation to frauds committed by guardians upon orphans given to their charge by dying parents. It was the custom in ancient times for parents, when drawing towards the end of life, to deliver their children into the hands of some person in whom they had confidence, and to entreat them to watch over them with tenderness, and to supply them with whatever they might want. But among the Athenians the practice was to nominate the guardians in the wills; and if they undertook the charge, they were bound under penalty to perform the duties of it faithfully and honestly. We find that Demosthenes sued his guardian for fraudulent conduct in the discharge of his duties. But if this action of *ἐπιτροπή*, as it was called, was not taken within five years after the ward became of age, the guardian was exempt from all punishment. There was also a specific form of action, which was taken by a master against his slave whom he had made free, when such manumitted slave neglected his duty. Demosthenes says, that it was in the nature of slaves when possessed of their freedom not only to act with ingratitude towards those who had given them their freedom, but even to entertain feelings of hatred for them, as being the persons who were especially cognisant of their former servitude. An act was therefore passed, whereby a freedman who was convicted of ingratitude should be again reduced

to a state of bondage. The Romans had a similar law, and this punishment they called *maxima capitis diminutio*, the greatest diminution of liberty. Valerius Maximus, in referring to this law among the Greeks, says, "What a memorable law is that of the Athenians, by which a freedman convicted of ingratitude by his master, is divested of the privilege of freedom." There was a form of action for the recovery of the interest of her dowry, by a wife who had been put away by her husband. It was the custom among the Greeks, when a man put away his wife, to return her dowry; or, if he neglected this he was obliged to pay a monthly sum for her support in the proportion of nine oboli to every pound; this was called the revenue of her dowry. There were forms of action in reference to rent due on a house, and on land. There was also a form of action by which a claim of right was made to the house or land. The defendant, notwithstanding his being served with these writs, could hold possession of the house or land; but upon his being cast upon a trial called *ἐξούλης*, he was compelled to give up possession.

Ἐξούλης was also the name of a writ of execution against a person who had lost his cause in court, and was fined a thousand drachmas, which he was to pay on a day fixed, neglecting which this writ was issued, under which entry was made upon his lands and possessions. This form of action was also used for other purposes of a somewhat similar nature.

The action of *confirmation of right* was that by which, if any one bargained for the purchase of any article of merchandise, and another questioned the

right of the seller to dispose of it, it was competent for him to oblige the seller to prove this right ; otherwise the seller was liable to this form of action. It was also customary with the Athenians to give "earnest" for what they bought ; which was a security that the thing purchased was to be made over to the purchaser. But the usual practice was to pay the full price down. There was another form of action taken by the relatives of a person dying without issue, in order to ascertain the nearest relative by blood for the purpose of securing the inheritance. There were several forms of writ connected with this subject, which it is unnecessary to recount. The writ called *'Απροστάσιον*, which was against strangers who neglected to provide themselves with patrons ; for the law compelled all strangers arriving in Athens to put themselves under the protection of a patron ; otherwise they were liable to prosecution as dangerous characters ; and if convicted, their goods were confiscated to the treasury of the city.

There were forms of actions against judges who had taken bribes, and the persons who had given them. The writ, or action of *'Αργίας*, was that which was taken against idlers, who, if convicted, were deprived of the privilege of the city. Solon amended this law, which had been made by Draco, and made the loss of privilege consequent only upon the third conviction. Of the other various forms and causes of action which prevailed among the Greeks it would be tedious as well as unprofitable to enter into the detail. It is only necessary to say that every possible relation of man to man, and of

individuals to the State, was provided for by enactments of law and modes of procedure, in order to insure the rights and liberties of the people in their private and public capacities, and to promote the general welfare of the Commonwealth. Whether it was as regarded a state of peace or of warfare, internal or external relations, family altercations, the rights of citizenship, or private interests, all were provided for with a discriminating foresight which prevented the possibility of disorder by anticipating every circumstance which, in the management of human affairs, might tend to create it. As the laws of a people afford the best index to their social condition, and to the degree of civilization at which they have arrived, we cannot contemplate those of the ancient Athenians without feelings of highest admiration for the lofty position in the domain of civilization which they had attained at an early period of their history.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

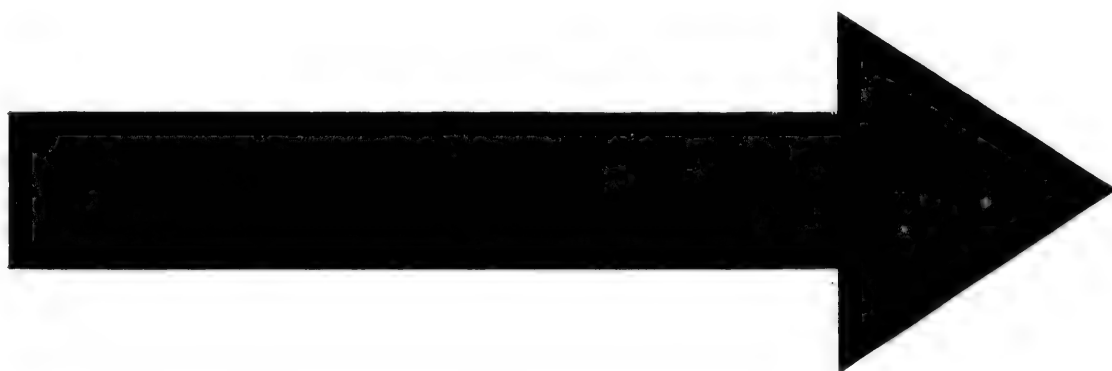
The elements of Grecian greatness—Early civilization of Greece
—Her secular and religious culture.

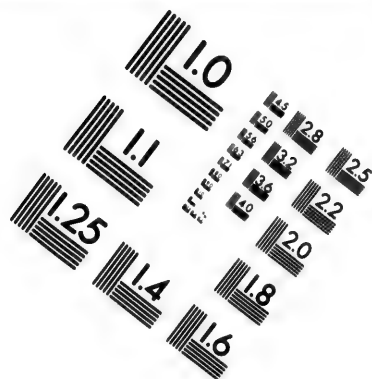
WE have seen the large space which this wonderful people devoted to the exercise of religious rites, and the worship of their gods ; we have seen them strive with wondrous effort to penetrate the regions of an impalpable world without other aid than that which a strong and ardent imagination afforded them ; and again we behold them, in the various phases of their daily life, exhibiting the qualities and characteristics of a people imbued with the most sterling virtue, enlightened with the brightest intelligence, and aiming at the loftiest destiny within the reach of humanity. This is not a picture of the fancy. The light which through nearly thirty centuries has passed down to our time, and which has preserved its splendours undiminished and unequalled through that passage of years, can be no *ignis fatuus*, no deceptive illumination, no fantasy of the imagination. The poetic fire which burned in the brain of Homer ; the philosophy which flowed from the lips of Socrates and of Plato ; the eloquence which glowed on the tongue of Demosthenes ; the inspiration which lighted on the pencil of Apelles, and the chisel of

Praxiteles ;—these are evidences of a genius and culture which place the Grecian name on the loftiest pedestal of human glory. If Grecian philosophy had disappeared in the wave of time ; if Grecian poetry had been but the wonder of an age, and had, like the play of a rocket, maintained but a temporary splendour ; if Grecian eloquence had only warmed and fascinated the age in which it flourished, and was not informed with that ever-living spirit which is of all time ; if the chisel of the statuary and the pencil of the painter were but the commonplace implements of a day, and not the medium of an inspiration as brilliant as it was imperishable ; then indeed might the glory of Greece be regarded as a passing meteor, and her fame but as the fleeting form of a midnight vision. It is wise, as it is interesting, therefore, to inquire into the causes which conspired to create this transcendent splendour, this immortality of fame which rests on the name of Greece : whence came the impulse which bade her spring forward in the path of glory, and outstrip all competition in the career of fame. In the minute details into which I have hitherto entered in the course of these pages on her history, internal polity, social regulations, customs, superstitions, and laws, I have had for aim the development of those principles which constituted the materials of her greatness and renown. I have not spoken of her wars, because I do not regard them as forming any part of that undercurrent of events which contributed to her substantial merits. They were but the result of her inherent virtues ; the evidence, so to speak, of that course of training

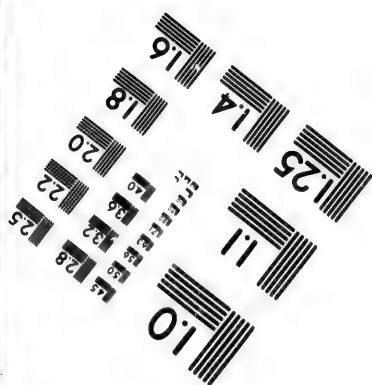
which formed and constituted her essential character. The Persian invasion did not create, because it could not create, the powers and the influences which called up Grecian valour in defence of Grecian liberties: it was only an occasion for summoning them into action in a new field; and for displaying their strength in the battle plain, as it had been displayed before in the field of domestic and social polity. If Education had not reared her throne on the Attic soil, Patriotism would have had no temple for her worship.

The savage would have defended his hut and the offspring of his blood against external as well as internal assault; but the savage would not have fought in the spirit of the Athenian; his resistance would not have been guided by the same exalted motives, or persevered in with the same undying enthusiasm. Education, exalted and spiritualized by the infusion of the religious sentiment, gave to the patriotism of the Greeks that proud elevation and sublime endurance to which no efforts of a barbarous people could ever attain. If Homer gave immortality to Grecian prowess in the battle plain of Phrygia, it was not the passage of arms on that field of war that inspired the genius of the immortal bard. If the Macedonian invasion fired the eloquence of Demosthenes, and caused the thunders of that eloquence to resound through successive centuries, fixing the attention of mankind up to the present hour, and bidding fair to transmit its reverberations to the last period of time, it was not the war of Philip, it was not the rush of invading hordes that produced the ele-



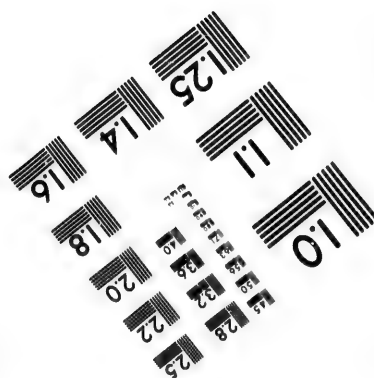


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ments of which that eloquence was composed. No ; the sublime spirit of both poet and orator sprang from a loftier, a purer region ; a region where education at once unfolded and invigorated the powers and faculties of the mind and soul, assisted by a religion of the most imposing and inspiriting character. A strange system of worship did this religion involve, no doubt ; but in raising the mind to the contemplation of a higher, a more glorified world, it enlarged and refined the intellect ; it awakened the heart to a communion with beings of a superior order ; and created that enthusiasm of glory which despised the commonplace pursuits of this life unless hallowed by the glory reflected from the life to come.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Greek Courtship—Philtres, and Love Potions—Forms of betrothal.

THE ancient Greeks practised various ceremonies in courtship and love-making, and dealt extensively in charms, and philtrations or love-drinks. They observed various signs, too, as indicative of love, or the contrary. The manner of untying the garland at a feast, and the tinkling of the ear, were carefully noted as certain evidences connected with the feeling of love. In order to ascertain whether the person beloved entertained a corresponding feeling the lover took some kind of leaf, and placing it on the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, struck it with the right; if it emitted a sound, it was considered a good omen; but otherwise it was regarded as unfavourable. It was also a common practice at their feasts to try their luck in this respect by the cross-beam and brass statue. It was done in this way: they fastened a stick upright in the ground, and placed another horizontally across it, with a pair of scales; beneath each scale was a bowl of water, and a brass gilt statue called *Manes*. Those who were desirous of ascertaining to which of them some particular female was disposed to give her affections, took each a

brazen goblet filled with wine, and standing at some distance from the balance drank a portion of the wine, and turning suddenly around flung the remainder into one of the scales. Whichever of them performed this feat with the greatest dexterity so as to cause the scale to descend and strike the head of the statue, sprinkling it at the same time with a portion of the wine, was deemed the successful competitor; and he had accordingly his *κράβιον*, or cake, the usual reward of victory in such cases, awarded to him. The liquor was sometimes merely flung on the ground, and if it made a loud splash it was considered a successful omen, as in the case of the leaf. Much advantage was attributed to the obtaining possession of something belonging to the young woman: but the skilful operation of the eyes was deemed of unsurpassing efficacy. They were called *θύραι τῆς ψυχῆς*, the doors of the soul.

Lucian says that the sight is the first step in Cupid's ladder of love; "the eye," he says, "kindles love." But the artillery of the eyes could not be brought into play unless the parties came into juxta-position; and accordingly we find that it was the custom in those times, as well as in our own, for the young man to visit the fair object, whose affections he wished to win, at the house of her parents. It was the peculiar office of the daughter to attend to the duties of hospitality, and to place the wine-cup before the stranger. The old couple having drunk, the young woman put the cup to her lips, and passed it to the stranger; who, observing the side at which she had touched it, took care to press it to his

lips at the same side. This they called the "missive kiss."

During all this time the eye is kept in play ; and the adventurous youth is calculating his success by its oscillations. The tongue is next brought into requisition ; and touching tales of other days, and songs high-flavoured with sentiment, are told and sung. He next presses her hand, and communicates his feelings through that sensitive medium ; and receives or judges of hers in turn. Philtres and incantations played their part, too, in this business of love-making ; and we find that the *ἰνυξ*, a kind of sparrow, occupied no mean position in the important work, its tongue being used for the purpose of creating the tender affection in the bosom of the fair one. It was wrapped, with the paring of her nails, around her ring ; and was considered to be of infallible efficacy. This bird was also sometimes tied to a wheel which was to whirl round, while an incantation was pronounced. In short, the charms used among the ancients for the purposes of love were of an almost endless variety. To some of us these practices may appear extremely nonsensical ; but they are certainly not more so than the similar practices which have prevailed more or less in every age and every country, even to the present day. The women of Thessaly were noted among the ancients for the practice and preparation of love potions, as were also those of Egypt. Those potions were made of the juice of certain herbs ; and their effect was sometimes injurious to the persons to whom they were administered, even so much so as to produce in-

sanity. But in such cases there were also counter-charms employed, which had the effect of nullifying the evil consequences of the potion.

The tender and solicitous attachment of the young Athenian women to their lovers, when their affections were once enlisted, is a subject of frequent remark with the ancient writers. They sent them frequent tokens of their attachment, such as garlands and roses, and writings breathing the fondest endearment. They also presented them with different kinds of birds, and most especially the dove. Their names were even pronounced with tenderness, and written on every wall and tree. The men, too, had their sweethearts' names always on their lips ; and inscribed their names even on the leaves of trees, as Callimachus has it.

Let on the leaves so many letters lie
As my Cydippe fair may signify.

Lucian, in reference to a love-sick swain whose fair idol was Cnidia Venus, says, "There was not a wall which was not engraven with her name, nor the bark of a tree which did not proclaim, O Venus fair!" We are told that Apollo himself had recourse to a similar alleviation of his love-sickness; he even inscribed his sighs upon the leaves of a flower,—*Ai! Ai! flos habet inscriptum*, "Alas! Alas! are the words inscribed on the flower." As soon as the lovers were engaged to be married, the young man, in the presence of witnesses, promised to be true and faithful to his betrothed after marriage; while the parent or guardian of the young woman, acting in her behalf, promised for her, or bestowed her upon him. Some-

times they both went into the temple, and mutually pledged themselves by the solemn sanction of an oath;—the young man, that he would love her sincerely; and the young woman, that she would reverence and obey him. We are informed that it was customary among the Galatians on similar occasions *to pledge their truth in a cup*, called thence *poculum conjugii*, the marriage-cup; and among the Macedonians to divide a loaf with a sword, and to take each one half.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Marriage ceremonies—Interchange of bridal presents—Song to Hymen—Wedding festivities.

ALL things having been thus far arranged according to custom, the marriage ceremony was next gone through. The parents of the betrothed led her into the temple of Minerva, as if to pay a last visit to the virgin goddess on her withdrawing herself from her service. A heifer calf that had never known the yoke was next offered in sacrifice to the goddess Diana, together with a lock of the young woman's hair. Then Venus and the Graces were to be propitiated by sacrifices; as was also Juno, who was supposed to be the protectress of young brides, as well as of mothers. The Fates, too, were not to be passed over in this general work of propitiation, but were to be sacrificed to, that they might not cut short the thread of life, but extend it to the utmost limit. Among the whole group of divinities, however, the one held in most especial reverence was Juno. Her name was ever on the tongues of lovers, and most fondly appealed to at the time of their union in marriage.

"My Juno!" and "My Jupiter!" were constant and favourite appellations, and terms of endearment be-

tween lovers. Bridal and marriage gifts were also interchanged between the parties. The gifts called *γαμήλια* were those sent by the bride to the public directors of feasts for the purpose of being admitted into the tribe of her husband. The gifts called *ἔδνα* were those given by either party at the time of the nuptials, or during the period of courtship. The wife also bestowed a garment upon the husband known by the name of *ἔδνιος χιτῶν*. It was indeed a common custom in ancient times for persons betrothed to make similar presents. We find it recorded in Genesis (chapter xxv.) that the servant of Abraham, when he had discovered her who was to be the wife of his master's son, Isaac, presented her with presents, "gold, ear-rings, and bracelets;" and also with "vessels of silver and gold;" and with "garments." Those gifts given by the Athenian bride to her husband were called *φερναί*. And this recalls a word of frequent use among the peasantry of Ireland, namely, the word *phern* or *fairin*, which signifies a gift or present given upon certain festive occasions. This coincidence of expression and similarity of meaning in the languages and customs of nations so remote and distinct as the ancient Greeks and Irish are calculated to awaken some curious speculative inquiries. Those coincidences are very frequent and such as cannot be ascribed to mere accident. Upon the arrival of the bride at the house of her husband, she underwent at his hands and those of her friends the ceremony of unveiling. This ceremony took place on the third day after her marriage. Previously to that the betrothed should appear always

covered in the presence of her husband. This veil was called *éavós*, and was similar to that worn by Rebecca when she first met with Isaac on her approach to the house of his father. The reason assigned for this custom is that the modesty indicated by the veiling of the face was calculated to increase the admiration and affection of the husband for his wife. She was conveyed to her husband's house in a carriage, the driver carrying a torch in his hand, amid the chanting of bridal songs. When the carriage arrived at the bridegroom's door the axle-tree was immediately broken and burnt, to signify that the bride was to remain there, and never to leave it. The bridesman generally sat in the carriage by the side of the bridegroom, or rode in another carriage beside that of the bride, it being his duty to lead her home to the house of her husband. If she happened to be the bridegroom's second wife, it was invariably the custom for the bridesman to perform this office of leading her home; for the husband himself in such case would be ashamed to be present, as it was considered discreditable to a man to marry a second time. She was also accompanied by her bridesmaid, whose duty it was to take off her veil, and perform for her such other offices as were deemed necessary. Her bridal adornments consisted of jewels and precious stones; and her bed was decorated with similar ornaments. Her wedding-dress was of purple cloth bespangled with gold. This description of course applies to the wealthy classes, for, as amongst ourselves, poor people had poor weddings. Upon her arrival at the house of

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her husband she found the door and doorposts hung with garlands. This custom of decorating the house with garlands was also prevalent among the Romans ; but the Christians, according to Tertullian, condemned the practice. This garland was composed, among the Greeks, of the plant *σῆσαυον*, sesame or watermint ; but of verbane among the Romans ; and of asparagus among the Bœotians. The marriage-cake was also made of the fruit of the sesame plant. Among the Romans it was customary to comb the hair of the bride with a spear : and this custom, according to some, was likewise prevalent among the Greeks. It originated from the feeling of the subjection which the wife owed to the husband ; or from the desire that the male issue of their marriage should become brave men, the spear being the emblem of bravery in men. When the bride was about to depart from her father's house, she was lifted over the threshold, to indicate that it was by force she was withdrawn from the paternal roof : hence the expression used among the Romans, *ducere uxorem*, to lead a wife, which was employed to convey the idea of a man's getting married.

The casting of figs and sweetmeats upon the head of the bride by the young people, when she entered her husband's house, was also a common ceremony among the Greeks. Then followed the nuptial sacrifice ; which was deemed essential for the completion of the marriage. In cutting up the victim, it was made an indispensable point of observance to throw the gall behind the altar ; which was intended to indicate that no bitterness or discord should exist between the

married couple, but that their lives should be marked by a sweetness of disposition and the absence of all rancorous feelings. Jupiter and Juno were the divinities to whom their prayers were especially directed in this nuptial sacrifice, as it was upon these they reposed their hopes of a happy and prosperous life, and of a blooming offspring. Any interruption given to the parties during these ceremonies was deemed highly irreverent, so much so that any claim upon the husband or wife, especially the latter, could not then be executed without great profanation ; nor indeed was the least incivility of any kind permissible on such occasions. This is evidenced by the story relating to Callicles, who, having been accused of bribery to the Court of the Areopagus, and officers having been despatched for the purpose of apprehending him and bringing him before the Court to answer to the charge, was not put under arrest in consequence of his being found engaged in the nuptial sacrifice. The officers seeing the garlands upon the door, and being told that the sacrifice was being offered, returned to the Court, who were satisfied with the reason given for deferring the arrest. Indeed the Greeks were most delicately scrupulous about all matters connected with husband and wife. We are informed that during their wars with Philip of Macedon, when some letters of his were intercepted, and were in course of being read in the court, one, addressed to his wife Olympia, was not allowed to be opened, but was sent back to him with the seal unbroken. They deemed nothing more inexcusable or more opposed to just and honourable feeling than any interference with the

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secrets of married people ; nor was any consideration of sufficient weight with them to justify the violation of this noble and honourable principle. The sacrifice having been performed, the bridal banquet followed ; and the Genius of married life was propitiated with flowing bowls and songs. The cake was carried around in a basket by a boy crowned with a garland of thorns, and bearing acorn boughs, and singing as he went, "They have avoided evil, and met with a better fate." Then was chanted the song to Hymen, the presiding deity of marriage, Ὕμην, ὦ Ὑμέναιε, ὦ Ὑμην, "Hymen, O nuptial Hymen, O Hymen." This song to Hymen, or one similar to it, was also a part of the marriage ceremony of the Romans, Talasius being by them substituted for Hymen. When the bride was conducted to her chamber, a sieve was also carried there with her, and a pestle was hung at the door ; which were intended to signify that she was thenceforth expected to assist her husband in the management of his domestic affairs, and to be ready to put her hand to any kind of labour. When the husband entered the chamber he divided a quince apple with the wife, which they both ate : this, says Plutarch, was an indication of the sweetness and harmony which at first should characterize their conversation. Should a cough or crow, however, send forth its harsh notes even at this moment, it was deemed a bad omen, and the bridal pair separated for that time. But to prevent this mischance boys were sent around the house to scare away this bird, crying, "The virgin drives away the crow." After the eating of the quince apple, the

bride took a hot bath, the water being brought from the Callirrhoe well, which was a spring remarkable for the clearness and purity of its water. The bride's mother then took off the lace or tie which bound her daughter's hair, and wrapping it around one of the torches which she carried, had it consumed in the flame, while she bound up the hair with a new lace. After this the *ἐπιθαλάμιον*, or marriage song, was sung by boys and girls outside the chamber door, with great noise and merriment. The next day the wedding festivities were renewed, and gifts, consisting of suits of clothes, and various articles of household necessity, were presented to the bride.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Times and seasons appointed for marriage among the ancients

—The age at which Greek women were deemed marriageable—Dowry, and other conditions of marriage.

THE period of the year deemed most propitious by the Greeks for the celebration of marriages was the first month of winter. Not that they regarded it as absolutely improper to marry in any other season, or month; but like almost every other people, both ancient and modern, they thought it right to devote one particular part of the year for this purpose, although they were not restricted to this, but might marry at any other time. The custom of the Persians, however, was different in this respect, for the Spring was the season appropriated by them for this purpose. Among the Romans there was one month only in the whole year which they looked upon as unpropitious for marriages; and that was the month of May. But the Greeks had no prejudice of this sort, their only care being, besides that of observing the first month of the winter, that the marriage should take place at the full of the moon, and in the latter part of the day.

The Greeks were entirely averse to forming matrimonial alliances with strangers; and they had accord-

ingly a law which provided that, if a stranger entered into marriage with a Greek woman, both his goods and himself were sold, and the third part of what they brought was to be given to the informer. The age at which it was competent for a man to become a husband was thirty-five; and this was fixed by law. Aristotle says it was thirty-seven; and Hesiod observes that a little more or less was of no consequence. The woman, if an heiress, or an only daughter, could be married only to her nearest of kin. If there were two or more suitors standing in the same relation to her, then the question was referred for decision to one of the chief magistrates. It was forbidden a man to marry a second wife while the first was still living with him. The law on this subject rendered the man so acting *ἄτιμος*, that is, degraded and disqualified for places of honour. The age at which women were considered marriageable among the Greeks was that of twenty-six, though they frequently married at an earlier age. Aristotle considered that they might marry at eighteen, though he was in favour of a more advanced age; while Hesiod thought sixteen a proper matrimonial age. It was necessary that the wife should be a free woman in order to entitle her to the rights of a matron; otherwise, she was held as *κτῆνος*, not *γαμετή*, that is, chattel, not a wife. If she were a stranger, she would be compelled to pay a fine of one thousand drachmas to the city. Although it was not permitted at a later period, yet we find that at the time of Socrates it was not unusual for the husband to take a second consort into his household. Socrates himself is reported to

have done this ; and from various instances given of it by some of the most popular of the ancient writers, it is evident that the practice was pretty general. It was also permitted to marry half-sisters, not by the mother's, but by the father's side. Æmilius Probus mentions the marriage of Cymon to his sister Elpinice, and says, *nam Atheniensibus licet eodem patre natas uxores ducere*, "for it is lawful among the Athenians for a man to marry his sister by the father's side."

Still, there is sufficient reason to believe that this was not a common practice ; but that, on the contrary, it was looked upon by the Greeks as a barbarous custom. It was also necessary that the wife should have been legitimately born, in order to entitle her to the rights and dignity of a matron. No woman without dowry or marriage portion was regarded with favour by the Athenians. She should be either an heiress, and therefore entitled to the whole estate of her parents, or the possessor of some property derived from her parents, in case she had a brother. It was therefore deemed disparaging to a man to take for his wife a woman who had neither of these qualifications ; and in order to remove the stigma which a marriage with such a person carried with it, it was usual with the husband to have a marriage contract prepared, signed, and witnessed, by which he made over to his wife some house or land in exchange for her pretended dowry.

CHAPTER XL.

Divorce, and its attendant circumstances—The care of the household the peculiar province of the Greek women—The solicitude with which the Greeks guarded the purity and honour of their women.

DIVORCE was looked upon by the Greeks as highly improper ; yet, it sometimes happened that a husband and a wife did separate at the option of either. When the separation was sought for and effected by the husband, it was not considered in so heinous a light as when proceeding from the wife. In the latter case it was held in the utmost abhorrence.

We have seen that it was looked upon as disgraceful in a man to marry again, even after the death of his first wife ; but should he have married after putting away his wife, he was regarded with the utmost contempt. In consequence of the severity with which the old established usage in these cases pressed upon the wife, an enactment was passed by which she was relieved from much of the hardship which had formerly attended her condition. If she could prove before certain judges, appointed by the Archon for that purpose, that she had strong justifiable grounds for demanding a separation, then she was not only favoured by a bill of divorce, but was entitled to have her dowry

paid to her, or a monthly maintenance as long as that should be withheld from her. The Greek wives were intolerant of servile occupations ; that is, they could not endure such employments as they deemed unworthy of their natural sphere of exertion. The management of the household and of domestic affairs was considered by them as their legitimate province. And as the husband was never expected to concern himself with inside-door business, so the wife felt that she should not be called upon to take part in any work outside the house. Yet we find that it was not an unusual thing with the Greek women to take part in out-of-door work ; which, however, they made the subject of bitter repining. Carrying water on the head was a part of the labour they were compelled to undergo, as it was also that of the Roman women. This custom among the women of the present time, in some countries at least, seems to have been minutely copied from the ancients ; for at present, as in former times, they carry the pitcher, or vessel, filled with water, on the top of the head, the hair being gathered up, and twisted in circular folds beneath it. I have often seen a woman balance in this way a large vessel filled to the brim with water, and walk steadily along with her arms akimbo, or folded over her breast.

The position of the Greek wife, however, and her exemption from servile occupations, depended very much upon the dower or fortune which she brought to her husband ; for we find Hermione, in Euripides, reproach Andromache with her want of fortune, and the condition in which she was thus necessarily placed : " My father," she says, " supplied me with many gifts,

that having been free of my hand, I might be free of my tongue too ; but you who brought nothing here with you must go out of doors."

But the care and management of the household affairs, as I have said, was the peculiar province of the Greek matrons. To busy themselves with all matters connected with the internal order and arrangement of the house was deemed by them not only necessary, but even honourable. The carding and spinning of wool and weaving it into cloth were operations to which they seem to have been especially favourable, and in which they occupied a large portion of their time. The Roman matrons, too, were partial to this description of labour, and, like the Greek women, were capable of executing fabrics of exquisite taste and workmanship.

We find that Creusa, the daughter of Erechtheus, king of Athens, and Penelope, the wife of Ulysses, a Grecian prince, were expert hands at the loom ; and that they regarded the employment of weaving as becoming their station. Now, we are not to take these domestic operations of the matrons of ancient times in the light of mere fanciful employments, or to imagine that they occupied themselves merely on works of an ornamental nature for the purpose of adorning their persons, and setting off their charms to win the admiration of the other sex, or gratify any feeling of vanity. On the contrary, their productions were of a substantial kind, and partook rather of the useful than the decorative ; for they wove and made their children's clothes, and such articles of domestic use as came within the sphere of a provident and careful housewife.

The jealousy with which the ancient Greeks guarded their wives and daughters from contact with the external world is a remarkable feature in their social and moral habits. The matrons, as well as the unmarried women, had their separate apartments, where they passed their time in those employments referred to, or in such quiet and unostentatious amusements as were suitable to their age, and necessary for their health. We find in the works of their poets rather curious instances of severity in this respect. In fact, it was not permitted them to go abroad except on rare occasions, and then they were to be attended by their maids, and decorated with all the ornaments which, according to established usage, appertained to female dress. Whenever they violated these regulations they were subjected to a fine at the instance of certain officers whose business it was to attend to this. This regulation, with the fine attendant upon its violation, was expressed in writing upon a tree in the Ceramicus. To go outside the door of the house unaccompanied and unadorned, or even to look out at the door or at a window, was considered among them a violation of female propriety. The private apartment of the women was up two stories high, so that they might be deprived of easy access to the outer world, and prevented from communication with any save those immediately connected with the household. Indeed such was the importance which the ancients attached to the purity of the female character, and to the inviolability of family honour, that there was nothing more abhorrent to their sense of moral dignity and self-respect than the contact which tended to destroy

or weaken the virtuous sensibilities of their women. They felt that any deviation from the right path, in this respect, was but the commencement of a downward career, whose ultimate result would be the destruction of the individual, and the obscuration of the family name. With a solicitude, therefore, only equalled by the magnitude of the object, they laid down such principles, and thereby encouraged such feelings, as they believed best calculated to secure the end aimed at. Yet, notwithstanding all this precaution on the part of the ancients for the preservation of the family honour, and the prolongation of a race of pure blood and untainted lineage, mischances sometimes occurred; and the line of untainted succession was occasionally broken. One of the striking instances of this which their writers have presented to our notice occurs in the seduction of Helen, the royal consort of Menelaus, whence flowed that train of ills so richly and copiously depicted in the pages of Homer. The prominence in this, as in so many cases of a similar kind, given by those writers to the violation of matronly virtue and maiden chastity, offers the most unerring clue to the feelings and manners, the moral principles and laws of honour, which characterized the age and country of which they are recorded. "Solon," says Plutarch, "made arrangements for the journeys of women, and for their mournings and sacrifices; and endeavoured to keep them clear of all irregularity and excess. They were forbidden to go out of town with more than three dresses; the provisions which they carried with them were not to exceed

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in value the sum of one obolus (one penny farthing) ; and their basket was not to be more than one cubit (a foot and a half) high ; and in the night they were not to travel except in a carriage, with a torch carried before them." Whosoever by word or enticement attempted to corrupt the honour of a woman, or to destroy her virtue, was punished in the most severe manner ; he might be even stoned to death with impunity by the person who detected him in the commission of so heinous an offence. And the woman who listened to the voice of seduction, and permitted the loss of her honour, was ever afterward debarred from all the privileges of her sex. She was not suffered to enter the temples of the gods ; nor was she allowed to make her appearance anywhere in the usual dress and ornaments of other women whose virtue was not impugned. Or if she should appear in such dress and ornaments, it was lawful for any person to take them from her and tear them. If she happened to be a married woman, her husband was not permitted to live with her, under pain of being declared *ἄτιμος*, that is, a degraded person disqualified from filling any office in the city.

CHAPTER XLI.

Customs observed by Greek women before and after child-birth
—Sacrifices, purifications, and other practices on those occasions.

BEFORE the birth of their children the Greek women paid especial devotion to the goddess Diana: they sacrificed to her, and invoked her assistance under the name of *Eileithuia* (ἐλθεῖν, to come). The Roman women, too, worshipped this goddess under similar circumstances, and under the name of *Egeria*, and sometimes of *Facilina*.

The names thus given to this deity arose from the various duties that she was expected to perform, as well as from the different attributes which were ascribed to her. So the Greeks called her not only *Eileithuia*, but also *Prothuraia*, *Okulocheia*, *Genethlios*, and so on; all expressive of her readiness to assist at the delivery of children. Besides the sacrifices offered to this goddess, there were others made to the *Tritopateres*, or three fathers, whoever they were. The husbands also had sacrifices to make, and devotions to pay to the Nymphs on those occasions. The women were forbidden to visit the temples for forty days before child-birth; and not afterwards until they had undergone the ceremony of purification. It

was their custom, during travail, to carry palm-branches in their hands, for they attributed great virtue to the palm-tree as being the emblem of victory. The Roman women, however, appear to have carried their superstitious rites and observances much farther; for there were various sprites and supernatural beings about whose influence they were particularly solicitous; so much so, indeed, that at the moment of their child-birth they had three men placed outside their chamber door, one with an axe, another with a broom, and the third with a pestle, for the purpose of beating and sweeping away those frightful hobgoblins. Upon the birth of a male child great joy was diffused throughout the domestic circle; for they looked upon male children as the foundation and pillars of a family. The children when born were dipped in water by the Athenians, but in wine by the Spartans; this latter practice taking its rise from the belief that the children would be thereby improved in strength. They were then anointed with oil, and wrapped in a cloth which had been woven by the mother before the marriage. If the child happened to be born when the State was engaged in a war, he was placed, not in a cradle, but upon a shield, which was regarded as an omen of fortitude; but if it were a season of peace, he was put upon a fan or sieve, which indicated peace and plenty. When five days old he was carried about the hearth or fireplace, the person who carried him exhibiting haste, as if it was intended to lose no time in introducing him to the Lares, or gods of the household. The house was then decorated with garlands, and the relatives of

the family poured in their *birth-gifts*—γενέθλια δόσεις, as they were called—preparatory to the naming-feast, or feast held for the purpose of celebrating the occasion of giving a name to the infant. The presents thus sent consisted principally of polypodes and cuttle-fish. By polypodes is meant any animal or vegetable with many feet or roots. These were intended, I presume, to represent the future progress and ramifications of the family. Doves, thrushes, and coleworts with oil, and toasted pieces of Chersonese cheese, were favourite dishes, we are told, on those festive occasions. According to Aristotle's account, the naming feast alluded to was kept on the seventh day after the child was born. This was esteemed a trying day ; that is, a child that lived and continued in health up to the seventh day after its birth was considered out of danger and likely to do well. Aristophanes differs from Aristotle as to the precise day on which the naming feast was held, the former fixing it as the tenth day after the birth of the child ; and this would appear to be founded in truth, inasmuch as the day of the feast was called δεκάτη, that is, the tenth, by the Greeks. The Romans celebrated a similar day under the designation of *Nomenalia*.

The name usually selected for the eldest son was that of the grandfather, although it was competent for the father to choose any name he pleased for any of his children. New names were often assumed by the young people themselves when they grew up to man's or woman's state ; or they sometimes changed their first names, and took others. The possessors

of slaves always gave them whatever names they pleased, without regard to those by which they were known before. Such names were derived either from country, colour, so some characteristic quality; or sometimes from the day on which they were purchased. Among the Romans, when a slave obtained his freedom he obtained a new name, which was chosen by himself; hence the taking of a new name was, among them, a sign of freedom. It was also usual for persons adopted into another family to take the name of such family; as it was with kings to assume a new name upon their accession to the throne: a custom also prevalent among the Persians. The ancients were also tenaciously observant of the rite of purification after child-birth; so much so, that until this rite was performed the mother was not permitted to go among the people, but was looked upon as a miasma, or source of infection. No one would enter her house while she lay unpurified; or if any happened to do so from accident, they immediately afterwards performed an ablution, as if they had been in contact with an infected body. The day set apart for this rite of purification is supposed to have been the tenth day after the birth; that is, the day on which the feast in honour of the *naming* of the infant was held. After this she was to offer sacrifice to Diana as an act of thanksgiving or gratitude for the blessings she had thus received at the hands of that goddess; and the husband also was to sacrifice to the Nymphs in acknowledgment of their favour for having bestowed upon him the blessings of a good wife and a hopeful offspring. As before child-birth it was

not allowed the woman to go into public places for forty days, so after it she was compelled to remain in-doors for the same period. During this time her food consisted chiefly of colewort.

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CHAPTER XLII.

Great solicitude of the Greeks with respect to the nursing of children—The practice of exposing children—Greek children divided into classes.

THE nursing of children was attended to with peculiar care by the Greeks. The nurses were obliged to go out frequently in the open air, and move about with their charge in the public walks and streets, carrying a pot of honey and a sponge with them, for the purpose of soothing the child with it, if it should become restless or uneasy. It was especially required that the nurse should keep herself clean and neat in her person and attire. The Spartan women were considered the best nurses, and were generally employed in that capacity by the Athenians. It would seem, however, that the women of Athens did not look upon the occupation of a nurse as being respectable; but, on the contrary, held it in the light of a degradation. This arose from the feeling of pride which was so characteristic of the Athenian women. We find instances in the Greek writers in which the circumstance of having been once employed in the capacity of nurse was objected as a disparagement to women; and in which those women apologized for the degradation of the employment by pleading necessity;

or complained of it by attributing it to compulsion. When the nurses meant to soothe or calm a child, they either kept crying out with a soft and prolonged voice, *lala, lala*; or they sung a low and mellow chant which they called *nainia*.

Theocritus gives one of these lulling chants:—

Sleep, my baby, a sweet and refreshing sleep ;
Sleep, my little soul, two little brothers, sound children ;
Go ye to happy sleep, and arise refresh'd.

If the child happened to die in its infancy, or before it cut its teeth, it was buried without funeral sacrifice or ceremony; nor was it deemed an occasion for sorrow or mourning. Plutarch alludes to this custom, where, advising a mother not to mourn for the death of her child, he says, "There was no funeral ceremony at his interment." The practice of exposing children, that is, of placing them without the care of the parents and family, and committing them to chance, was very common among the ancients. This was resorted to in cases of bodily deformity. In the instance of Moses, however, it was not in consequence of any defect in his members that he was so exposed—for we read that he was a "goodly child"—but in order to elude the vigilance of Pharaoh. Among the Athenians it was altogether the act of the parents, who were not compelled to it by any compulsory enactment or supervision of the state: but not so among the Spartans, who had a committee appointed for the purpose of examining every child, and ascertaining whether it was of perfect form or not. The places where children were thus exposed were commonly the

borders or banks of lakes and rivers, as happened in the case of Moses; and also of Romulus and Remus, the Roman brothers, who were exposed by their uncle Æmilius for the purpose of securing to himself and his offspring the sovereignty of Rome. They were sometimes also thrown into drains and pits. The Spartans had a pit of this kind at Taygetus, into which were cast all children who had been pronounced defective in body. They were occasionally exposed in woods and places of solitude; and in some instances thrown into the sea. When the child was exposed on the dry land, it was wrapped up in a swaddling-cloth, and put into an earthen pan or pot; but if committed to the sea, or launched into a lake or river, it was put into a basket made of ozers or bulrushes, made close with a coating of slime and pitch. Such is the description of the vessel into which Moses was put when exposed on the "river's brink." "And when she could hide him no longer, she took a basket made of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and pitch; and put the little babe therein, and laid him in the sedges by the river's brink" (Exod. ii. 3). It was the custom, however, on such occasions to decorate the child with various valuable ornaments, such as gold rings and jewels, and also with garlands. This may have been intended as a mournful commemoration of the child, as a sort of funeral obsequies, such as they employed in cases of death; or its object might have been to provide for the support of the child in the event of its being found and taken in charge by any other person; or, if found dead, that the charges of burial might be defrayed by these means. To this Terence

alludes where he say, *si moveretur, ne expers partis esset de nostris bonis*, so that if he died he should not be in want of a part of our goods.

These were called *παίγνια*, playthings, and consisted sometimes of bottles, bells, and such other toys; which were fastened around the neck. They sometimes had letters or other marks upon them by which the child might be known in the event of its being preserved. In fact it very frequently happened that children were exposed, not for the purpose of being destroyed, which could be but rarely the case, but either with the view of escaping detection, as in the case of Moses, or of concealing the birth of an illegitimate child. For when a child not born in wedlock was thus put away, the mother's offence, and the child's illegitimacy were alike concealed from public notice. We have many instances of some of the most distinguished and celebrated men of antiquity having been born and exposed in this way. The custom, however, was not universally approved by the ancients, for we learn that the people of Thebes deemed it advisable to put an end to it by passing a law for that purpose. The Romans also passed a similar law, and provided that no child which had been exposed should be made free of the city. The practice of removing children from one country to another for the sake of safety and protection was also frequent among the Greeks. Of this we find an instance in Orestes, who was concealed in Phocis to protect him against the rage of Ægysthus; and Sophocles, referring to this, describes him as having passed a "youth of concealment."

Children were divided into four classes among the Greeks, according to the social position and relation of the parents; and their education was directed with reference to the particular class to which each belonged. The son of a married free woman was called *γνήσιος*, or *ἰθαγενής*, and belonged to the first class. Of the second class was he who was born of a foreign woman, or of a woman not married to the father of the child; and he was called *νόθος*. If this father were a private man, the child was not admitted as of the family, nor allowed to bear the family name; but if he were a prince, or a person in power, the child was held as nobly born, and consequently entitled to all the advantages belonging to such a condition. In the former case the child had no right of inheritance, and was entitled only to what was called *τὰ νοθεία*, that is, the portion of illegitimacy, which was a small sum of money. We find that Abraham gave some such portion to his children who were not born of his wife Sara: "And Abraham gave all his possessions to Isaac. And to the children of the concubines he gave gifts, and separated them from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, to the east country." (Gen. xxv. 6.)

The third class embraced all those whose parentage was unknown, at least, as far as the father was concerned. These were called *σκότιοι*. And the fourth class consisted of such as had been born in wedlock, but whose mothers were pregnant at the time of their marriage. There were besides these four classes, other children who belonged to neither, such as adopted children, the children of freedmen, and the grandchildren of freedmen.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Greece, the great nursery of youth—Modes of education—Discrimination in the education of the children of the rich and poor; and other regulations relating to the youth of both sexes.

THE writers of antiquity are generally agreed in distinguishing Greece, and more particularly the district of Attica, as the best nursery of youth. Euripides calls it *κουροτρόφος*, the trainer of youth, by way of pre-eminence; and Suidas represents Erecthonius, the exposed child of Vulcan, as offering sacrifice to *γῇ κουροτρόφος*, the youth-training land, in acknowledgment of the advantage he derived from having been brought up in that country; and as erecting an altar to her, and passing a law that all who offered sacrifices should do so first to her. In the system of education pursued by the Greeks, the first aim was to provide for the bodily health of the children, and then for their mental improvement. They were early taught how to swim, and to exercise their bodily faculties; and being thus strengthened, they were supplied with intellectual food. The description and extent of the knowledge with which they were supplied were governed by the position and circumstances in which they were born. For instance, if the father

were a poor man, the education of the child was shaped with a view of acquiring a trade ; but if rich and powerful, the field of instruction became enlarged ; and philosophy, music, gymnastic exercises, hunting and the like, were deemed the necessary acquisitions of the sons of such a man.

Plutarch informs us that if the education of a son were neglected by his father, and that he was not brought up to any trade, it was not incumbent on him to support the father in old age and poverty ; which he was otherwise bound to do according to the law. The affection of the Greek children for their parents, but more especially for the mother, is a subject observed upon by the ancient writers. Whenever a child became addicted to any particular fault, and every other means resorted to for his reformation had failed, if a mother but exposed her bosom to him in deprecation of his offence, his feelings were at once affected, and his conduct underwent an immediate change. Corporal chastisement, however, was very frequently inflicted both by father and mother ; this was done by tying the culprit to a post, and lashing him with a whip.

Before the time of Solon, the father's power over his son was permitted to be carried even to the length of disposing of him as a chattel. This monstrous power was, however, abridged by the law of Solon, which restricted it to cases in which the son was taken in the commission of the heinous crime of adultery. It was at all times competent for the father to disinherit his son whenever any sufficient cause led him to the adoption of such a step. But before it could be

effected, the grounds on which its necessity rested should be first submitted to the consideration of the judges, and be approved by them. After that the Κήρυξ, or crier, went about proclaiming, "*Such a person* has denied that *such a person* is any longer his son." He might, however, be again taken in by the father, and reinstated in his former position as a member of the family; after which it was not competent for the father to disinherit him. When the boys arrived at the age of between three and seven years, they were taken by their fathers to the φράτορες, or members of the tribes to which the parents respectively belonged, and registered each according to his tribe. But before this registration took place it was incumbent on the father to swear that the child was his; and still, notwithstanding such oath, the chiefs of the tribe had the privilege of bringing the matter into question, and compelling a reference to the judges. There was a time set apart for this enrolment into the tribes; but it generally took place on the third day of the feast called ἀπατούρια, which was held by the fathers of families, or heads of tribes. The third day of this festival was called κουρευούτις, that is, the hair-cutting day, because on that day it was the custom to cut off the hair of the boys for the first time and consecrate it to some god. The hair thus cut off was called θρεπτήριον πλόκαμον, or nursing hair; as that cut on the occasion of a funeral was designated πενθητήριος, or mourning hair. This custom of consecrating the hair of the Greek youth to one of their gods, was similar to that which prevailed among the Nazarites, as we learn in the Book of Numbers, of the

Old Testament : "All the time of his separation no razor shall pass over his head until the day be fulfilled of his consecration to the Lord. He shall be holy, and shall let the hair of his head grow." The hair which the Greeks thus consecrated to their gods they called *κόμης ἀπαρχαί*, or first fruits of the hair. Suetonius informs us that Nero put the first fruits of his beard into a golden box adorned with precious stones, and placed it in the Capitol. And Theseus, king of Athens, is said to have consecrated his hair to the god Apollo in the island of Delos. Euripides makes Bacchus exclaim, when Pentheus threatened to cut off a lock of his hair : "The sacred lock, I nourish it for the god." Children who were born of noble blood were wont to be brought to Delphos for the purpose of consecrating the hair to Apollo ; but all others made the offering to any god they pleased. The same custom existed among the Romans ; and to which Martial alludes in the verse : *Hos tibi, Phœbe, vovet totos a vertice crines*, "To thee, Apollo, he devotes all his hair from the crown of his head." Statius makes mention of Æsculapius, the god of medicine, as one of the gods to whom a hair offering was made by the ancients : "And he sent his dainty locks to Pergamus, as a sacred offering to the god." This is said in reference to one who had sent his hair to Æsculapius at Pergamus, made up in a box adorned with precious stones. It is a custom in the Roman Catholic Church, upon the initiation of nuns into the sacred order, to have the hair all cut off from their heads, as it was in ancient times with respect to the vestal virgins. The latter, however, had their locks

hung upon a tree, which was set apart for that purpose ; while the former make no exhibition of the last vestiges of worldly vanity in this way. At the age of eighteen the youth of Greece were enrolled among the *ἐφῆβοι*, that is, young men ; and were then considered capable of bearing arms, and defending the state equally against external aggression and disorder from within. They were, however, first examined by officers chosen for that duty, and if they were not found sound in limb and constitution they were not admitted. But after having successfully passed the examination they were taken into the temple of Argulus, where they took an oath of fidelity to the gods and the country. This ceremony also took place on the third day of the feast *ἀπατούρια*, that is, on the *κουρευούτις*, or hair-cutting day, when a portion of the hair was also cut off, and consecrated to the rivers of the country ; not, as in the former case, to Apollo, or any other of the gods. We find Paul observing this rite at Cenchrea : " But Paul, when he had stayed yet many days, taking his leave of the brethren, sailed thence into Syria (and with him Priscilla and Aquila), having shorn his head in Cenchrea. For he had a vow " (Acts xviii. 18). Again, we learn that when Paul had come to Jerusalem, the ancients of the people thus addressed him : " Do therefore this that we say to thee. We have four men who have a vow on them. Take these and sanctify thyself with them ; and bestow on them that they may shave their heads ; and all will know that the things which they have heard of thee are false ; but that thou thyself also walkest keeping the law " (Acts xxi. 23, 24).

According to the law of the Nazarites the hair cut off was thrown into the fire: "Then shall the hair of the consecration of the Nazarite be shaved off before the door of the tabernacle of the covenant; and he shall take his hair, and lay it upon the fire, which is under the sacrifice of the peace-offerings." (Num. vi. 18.) It is necessary to observe that previously to the cutting of the hair, upon the admission of young men into the ranks of the ἑφηβοί among the Greeks, it was usual to perform a ceremony called τὰ οἶνιστερία; that is, they took a vessel of wine, and consecrating it to Hercules, they drank a health to all present.

At the expiration of two years from the date of admission into the ἑφηβοί, that is, at the age of twenty, they were admitted into the ranks of manhood, and thus became entitled, *sui juris*, to the administration of property or estate. Their names were then registered in the book of registry, called Λεξιαρχικὸν Λεύκωμα by the Demarchus, an officer whose duty it was to attend to this registration. This book was so called because it contained the names of young men who had entered upon their inheritance (λέξις ἄρχω); and was on that account esteemed by them as a white or beautiful book (λευκός). The names of the young women were never entered in any book or registry until they were married, when they became of the tribe of their husbands. It has been already observed that the son was bound by law to support his father when he became old or unable to support himself, unless the son was either a νόθος, that is, an illegitimate child, or had not been brought up to a

trade by his father ; in either of these cases there was no obligation on the son to support his father. The neglect of this filial duty was looked upon with great abhorrence by the Greeks ; and the person found guilty of such neglect was, after trial and conviction, subjected to that most degrading and disgraceful punishment, total exclusion from society. He was also obliged to pay a fine. But this duty was not confined to parents only ; it extended to any person who had brought up or educated him. To be snatched away from life before being able to repay this debt was deemed a most grievous calamity by those who owed it. Homer alludes to this feeling in the *Iliad* (4th book) : "Cut away in early life, he was prevented from paying to his dear father the expenses of his education."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Attention of Greek children to their parents—Laws of inheritance—Inheritance by adoption; and the conditions annexed thereto.

THE attention of children to their parents was indeed of the most exemplary kind; so much so that any neglect of those duties which it was deemed incumbent on them to discharge towards the authors of their being, was, in their own estimation, attended with ill success in life. It was an invariable practice with daughters to wash and anoint with oil the feet of their fathers, upon returning from a journey. And not only this; but to show the extent of duty and devotion to which they felt themselves bound, they were even wont to kiss their feet after having thus washed and anointed them. Aristophanes makes mention of this custom in his *Medea*, thus: "And first his daughter washed his feet, and anointed them, and stooping forward kissed them." It was also the duty of a son to defray the expenses necessary for the decent burial of his father: a duty which was no more to be neglected than that of supporting him in his old age. If a man had no children, it was competent for him to adopt one to whom he might leave his estate. This adoption was effected by will, signed and sealed in presence of a magistrate. The person so adopted

was then made free of the city, and registered among the tribe of him by whom he was adopted. Before Solon's time it was not allowed to bequeath an estate to any but those who were of the kindred of the testator; but according to his laws it might be conveyed to any person whatever, provided that the testator had no son of his own, and was of sound mind at the time he had made his will, and that he was not under restraint, or otherwise reduced by force or violence to the course he had adopted. If he were a stranger, any will which he might have made would be inoperative and void; for in such case his estate was confiscated to the public treasury. Neither could a person who had been adopted by another make a will in favour of any one he pleased; for the law provided that the estate of such a person should descend to the nearest of kin of him who had adopted him. If the testator had more than one son, they were to be *ἰσόμοιροι* that is, equal sharers of the estate; but if he had no son or daughter, and died intestate, it went to the next male relative of the family. If he had a daughter, she would become sole heiress, that is *ἐπίκληρος*, as the Greeks called her; and she should be married to the next of kin, who was thus to become sole heir by virtue of the marriage.

A woman or boy was incompetent to devise anything by will beyond a certain measure of barley, called *μέδιμνον κριθῆς*, or its value in money. In all cases of inheritance the party claiming had to set forth his claim before the city magistrate, so that if any opposition were made to it, the case was to be decided before the judges.

CHAPTER XLV.

everence for the dead a prominent feature of the Greek character, as well as of that of the ancients in general—Ceremonies and observances connected with the burial of the dead.

RESPECT for the dead, and a religious solicitude for their interment, was among the chief characteristics of the ancients. To allow a dead body to remain over ground and uncovered with earth was deemed by them a sacrilege which incurred the highest displeasure of the gods. Justice to the dead was in their estimation of no less obligation than that which was due to the immortal gods themselves, as well as to living men. The very places of sepulture were called the *temples* of the dead, and the rites performed for the deceased were designated by the expression *τὰ νόμιμα*, the ceremonies of justice.

It was therefore an established custom, sanctioned by law among the Greeks, that when any one chanced to come upon a dead body, he was bound under penalty to cast some earth upon it three times, and place a turf over it. The same custom prevailed among the Romans, to which Quintilian refers where he says: "We place earth over the dead bodies of persons unknown; and no haste should cause us to pass by any such body without performing this duty of

reverence for the dead." Another writer says that, "They who saw a dead body, and did not throw dust upon it, were deemed accursed." They thought that the divinities residing in the lower regions were anxious in an especial manner that this duty should be performed, and that its omission was attended with their peculiar vengeance. They deemed no imprecation more severe than wishing that any person after death might not be covered with earth; and we meet with many instances of the feeling manifested on this head by the prince and warrior, as well as by the humble, in the pages of ancient writers. Nothing created more anxiety in the breasts of the Greeks, as well as of the people of antiquity in general, than the idea that they might die without the rites of sepulture being performed for them; hence we find it to have been a common practice among them, that when any one was about putting out to sea, and became apprehensive of shipwreck, he tied around some part of his body a sum of money or something of value, so that whoever should find him would be compensated for the trouble and expense of burying him.

It was also an universal feeling that the sooner the burial service to the dead was performed, the more pleased would be the spirit, or *manes* of the departed.

But there was another source of unhappiness, which consisted in the person dying in a foreign country; and whenever this occurred it was usual with the friends of the deceased, in order to appease and give comfort to the departed spirit, to call upon his name *three times*. Thus Pindar tells us that when Phryxus was dying at Colchis, he requested his friend Pelias to see that this office should be performed for him.

And Homer relates that Ulysses, after having lost some of his companions among the Cicones, took care "to call upon each of them three times." Theocritus mentions Hylas as having been thus invoked three times ; although Virgil, referring to the same circumstance, represents the invocation as having been made only twice : "The sailors sent up such a shout at the fountain where he was buried, that the whole shore resounded with Hylas, Hylas." Although, no doubt, it was gratifying to the feelings of the living as well as of him who was about to die in a foreign land, to believe that the body might, by means of such invocation, be mysteriously conducted to its native land, yet it is not to be supposed that this was an universal creed with the Greeks. The idea was accompanied with a sort of vague but yet consolatory impression that the thing desired would be accomplished by the prescribed ceremony, on the principle that the "wish is father to the thought ;" but that it was really believed by the higher and more intelligent classes of the people would be a gratuitous assertion, notwithstanding that they accommodated themselves and paid due attention to the popular usage. It was a very general custom among the ancients to erect monuments to the dead, which the Greeks termed *Κενόταφια* ; so that, although the bodies were buried far away, and in strange lands, yet the memory of the dead was kept alive by graves and monumental structures consecrated to, and inscribed with, their names. Virgil, in the *Æneid*, represents *Æneas* as having erected such a monument, on the Rhætian shore, to the memory of his father, who had died far away from the place : *Tumulum Rhætio in littore inanem*

constitui, "I constructed an empty tomb on the Rhætian shore." The followers of the philosopher Pythagoras were wont to erect some such monument to those of their own sect who had swerved from their system of philosophy, for they looked upon them as though they were dead.

It is reported to have been a custom among the Athenians, that when a man committed suicide, they cut off the hand with which he had perpetrated the act, and buried it away in a separate place from the body. It was intended by this, perhaps, that the hand, having been stained with guilt, was unworthy of participating in the funeral honours paid to the body. Among ourselves it is usual to exclude suicides from consecrated ground—a practice which would imply a more rational abhorrence of the crime of self-destruction than that of the Athenians; for we thus stamp the entire relics of the suicide with degradation, not alone the particular member with which the foul and wicked act was perpetrated. It was also a point of great importance with them to die in a becoming manner, or to fall gracefully, as they termed it. The women especially were most solicitous as to this; as they considered it highly indecorous to have any part of them, not proper to be seen, exposed to view as they were dying. The depriving a man of life by violent means was looked upon in various lights by the Greeks: if the act were done in what was esteemed as a good cause, it was not deemed offensive to the gods; and in such case the perpetrator, after washing his hands, as was the custom, held up the sword or weapon with which he had committed the murder towards the sun, with the blood still reeking upon it, as if to

signify that he had no apprehension of gods or men, as to the justice and propriety of the act. If, however, the deed had been committed without the sanction of a sufficient, or rather, a virtuous motive, then instead of displaying the weapon in triumph, he wiped away the blood in the hair of the murdered man, and returned it to the sheath. But if the victim were one of his own kindred, he believed that the blood could never be wholly wiped off, and that it was necessary to have recourse to spells and charms in order to keep away the avenging Furies. With this view he cut off the extremities of the members of the murdered man, and binding them together, wore them under his armpits. These were called *ἀκρωτήρια*. In cases of murder by treachery, the *ἀκρωτήρια* were worn around the neck instead of under the armpits; and the murderer, taking some of the blood of his victim, spat three times into his mouth. The object of thus wearing on the person a part of the body of the victim, was to prevent the Furies, or the ghost of the deceased, from injuring them; their belief being that the murderer would be spared for the sake of that which he bore about him. This custom was prevalent also among the Romans; and Virgil, in the *Æneid*, makes reference to it when describing, in the person of *Æneas*, the lacerated condition of *Deiphobus* in the nether regions:—

Here Priam's son, Deiphobus he found,
Whose face and limbs were one continued wound;
Dishonest with lopp'd arms the youth appears
Spoil'd of his nose, and shorten'd of his ears,
He scarcely knew him, striving to disown
His blotted form, and blushing to be known.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Homicide, and the punishments consequent upon its perpetration—Similar laws among the Greeks and Israelites with respect to those punishments.

WE find that the custom of cutting off the extremities of the limbs of enemies was prevalent among the Israelites. In the book of Judges it is said : " And Adonibezec fled ; and they pursued after him and took him, and cut off his fingers and toes. And Adonibezec said : Seventy kings, having their fingers and toes cut off, gathered up the leavings of the meat under my table : as I have done, so hath God requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there." In cases of homicide, that is, whenever a man killed another by accident, or without intent to murder, he was obliged to fly from his country for a brief period, and place himself under the protection of some person possessing power and authority, who could not refuse to receive him in such a case. He was there to expiate his offence, and purify himself from the stain of guilt which it had brought upon him. While undergoing this ordeal of purification he was placed by the hearth, which was deemed a place sacred and holy. If the victim in this case happened to be one of the kindred of the per-

petrator, then his period of exile was to continue for twelve months. If he appeared in the place where he had committed the crime, before the expiration of his term of exile, he was shunned by everybody who knew him; he was not permitted to participate in the public sacrifices; nor was any one allowed to receive him into their houses, or even to speak to him, he being considered as an unholy thing, and unworthy the name of man. A similar custom was established among the Israelites, as we find in the Book of Josue: "And the Lord spoke to Josue, saying: Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, Appoint cities of refuge of which I spoke to you by the hand of Moses, that whosoever shall kill a person unawares may flee to them, and may escape the wrath of the kinsman who is the avenger of blood. And when he shall flee to one of these cities, he shall stand before the gate of the city, and shall speak to the ancients of that city such things as prove him innocent, and so shall they receive him, and give him a place to dwell in. And when the avenger of blood shall pursue him, they shall not deliver him into his hands, because he slew his neighbour unawares, and is not proved to have been his enemy two or three days before. And he shall dwell in that city, till he stand before judgment to give an account of his fact, and till the death of the high-priest who shall be at that time: then shall the manslayer return, and go into his own city and house from whence he fled." It was a custom with the people of Thessaly, in cases of accidental murder, to drag the murderer around the grave of his victim, and thus impress him with a sense of the abhorrence

with which they regarded his crime. Whatever the distinctions might have been with which the crime of murder was looked upon by the ancients, it is evident that they all held it in deserved and unqualified detestation, and that the murderer under every shade of circumstance incurred their indignation and hatred.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Ancient customs at Wakes and Funerals—Superstitious observances of the Greeks in connection with the burial of the dead.

To die in a foreign land, or away from their parents and kindred, was considered among the ancients in the light of a great calamity; and to be deprived of the consolation of knowing at their last hour that their eyes would be closed after death by the hands of parents or of relatives was a misfortune which no consideration could compensate. At the moment when the soul was departing from the body, it was a custom among the Greeks to commence a great noise by the ringing of brazen vessels or of bells; and among the Romans to set up a loud cry, *exclamatio*, as it was termed; and this, in both cases, with the view of recalling the departing spirit, believing that it had not yet taken leave of the body, and was but hovering between the confines of life and eternity. As soon, however, as it was ascertained that the spirit had fled, the lids were drawn close over the eyes by the parents or kindred, as I have said, if they happened to be living, and the deceased in his native country and among his own. Then the face was covered over with a cloth, an office which was also assigned to the family according to the degree of

kindred, as was every duty that custom had prescribed for the dead. The body was afterwards extended and covered with a shroud. It need scarcely be observed that the performance of all those offices for the dead was always assigned to the female kindred ; for instance, the wife performed them for the husband, the daughter for the father or mother, the sister for the brother, and so on, according to the degree of relationship. It is worthy of remark that this custom connected with the duties to the dying and the dead among the ancient Greeks, resembles in nearly every particular that which has existed up to the present day in Ireland. The cry at the house of death—which, however, rather resembles the Roman *exclamatio*—the closing of the eyes, the stretching and shrouding of the body—and all this, too, by the parents and nearest kindred—these are duties which the Irish people never fail to perform to the dying and the dead. To treat a dead body otherwise than as a sacred object was, among the Greeks, considered as a fearful offence : yet to touch a corpse was looked upon as an act of pollution, and the person who had been thus defiled could not touch anything holy until he had performed an ablution. The graves of the dead were also regarded as sacred, and any improper interference with them was deemed a desecration. When the body was about being removed for interment, it was usual to place a piece of money in his mouth, which was intended as the fare for Charon, the ferryman, who was to convey him across the river Styx. This piece of coin was called *δανάκη*, that is, the dead money. A piece of pudding or of cheese was also placed upon

the corpse, or in the coffin, for the purpose of propitiating Cerberus, the dog with three heads which guarded the entrance to the nether world. This bribery mess, as it may be called, was usually composed of flour mixed with honey, and thence called *melittouta*. I cannot positively say that any exactly similar custom to this has ever been observed by the Irish peasantry; although I am aware that a notion has partially prevailed among them, that when on their way to the other world they ought to have a piece of money placed upon them to defray their travelling expenses. I myself knew an Irishman, one Tom Knight, in the Island of Newfoundland, who appeared to be impressed with this superstitious belief. He was an honest, simple-minded man, who had spent his early manhood in the naval service of England, and who had afterwards removed, with his wife and family, to Newfoundland. He lived in a retired spot in the woods, on the margin of a large tract of marsh-land, and cultivated a small patch of ground, by means of which he supported his family. He was very poor, and yet he was fond of meeting a friend, and taking a social glass with him. However, at an advanced age he was seized by death, and calling his wife to his bedside, he told her that he was going to die; and then laid it as an obligation upon her that she should put a quarter or half-dollar in his coffin, so that he might be able to take some refreshment, until he got over the marshes at any rate. Poor Tom! I knew him well; and I know also that his old woman, as he used to call his wife, obeyed his last injunction, and believed in its necessity.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Ablution of the dead—Funeral dirge—Order of procession at Funerals.

To embowel and wash the bodies of the dead was a custom which prevailed among the Greeks, as among the people of antiquity generally. In Athens, if the deceased had been a free man, that is, if he had possessed the freedom of the city, his body was embowelled, and washed in warm water, put into a tub or vessel which was kept in a temple for this purpose. This ablution was called *λουτρον πανύστατον*, or last washing, of which we find an example in Holy Writ in the person of Tabitha: "And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick and died. Whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber." (Acts ix. 37.)

This ceremony was often performed by the parties themselves while living: for we find in Plato that Socrates, preparing for death, thought it well to perform the death ablution for himself, and thus spare the women the trouble of it. And when Alcestis, according to Euripides, was about to die for her husband, she washed herself in "river-water." And the same author, in reference to Iphigenia, represents her in her dream as washing one of the

pillars of the house, fancying it to be the body of her dead son. This ceremony of ablution was the peculiar province of the women ; but in their absence, and when necessity demanded it, it might be performed by men. Galen refers to the case of Theaganēs, who had been washed by the Cynics, because he had neither wife nor children to do it for him. After the ablution had been performed, it was the custom to anoint the body, and pour ambrosia upon the head and face, after which it was wrapped in a fine garment, which had been woven in the life-time of the deceased, either by the wife, in the case of a husband, or by some other friend, for the purpose. The hands were then tied together, and also the feet, with bands of cloth, which had been in like manner provided beforehand for the purpose. We find reference made to this custom in the Sacred Writings: "And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him, and let him go." After the body had been thus wrapped in the shroud or winding sheet, which among the Greeks was of a white colour, though the Romans adopted black, it was next ornamented with garlands, which were intended as a symbol of victory—the victory gained over the ills and calamities of life. It was then placed upon the ground, with the feet turned towards the door ; which was intended to imply that the deceased was never again to enter into the house. It was then taken up and laid upon a couch adorned with herbs and flowers, and especially with branches of the olive-tree, which was especially

devoted to a commemoration of victory. The couch, thus adorned, was then placed near the door, that the body might be ready to be borne away to its last resting-place when the appointed hour arrived. From the time that it was laid out until its final removal there stood by the door a large earthen vessel filled with water brought from another house, in which the persons going in and out were to wash themselves. This ablution by the people attending a wake was called *λούεσθαι ἀπὸ νεκροῦ*, a washing from the pollution of the dead : for it was a point of belief among the ancients that a house in which lay a dead body was polluted, and that a process of purification was necessary for all who entered the house, as well as for the house itself. The Israelites followed the same practice, as we find in the Sacred Writings : "He that washeth himself after touching the dead, if he toucheth him again, what doth his washing avail ?" (Eccles. xxxiv. 30.) And again : "He that toucheth the corpse of a man, and is therefore unclean seven days, shall be sprinkled with this water on the third day, and on the seventh, and so shall be cleansed. If he were not sprinkled on the third day, he cannot be cleansed on the seventh. Every one that toucheth the corpse of a man, and is not sprinkled with this mixture, shall profane the tabernacle of the Lord, and shall perish out of Israel : because he was not sprinkled with the water of expiation, he shall be unclean, and his uncleanness shall remain upon him." (Num. xix. 11, 12.) On the day following that on which the body was laid out in the manner we have seen, at early dawn it was borne away on men's

shoulders to the grave. The Greeks were averse to being buried at night, which they looked upon in the light of a degradation or a calamity. "You shall be ignominiously buried in the night, and not in the day," says Cassandra, the prophetess, to Talthybius, in the spirit and language of a threat. If the death of the person had been occasioned by violent means, it was usual with the relatives and friends of the deceased to carry arms, such as spears and swords, at the funeral, and also to be clad in armour. As the corpse was in the act of removal from the house, the praises and virtues of the deceased were proclaimed aloud, and his soul recommended to the care and protection of the gods of the nether world; expressions of sorrow for his departure from the bosom of his friends, and of grief for his loss, were also sent forth; and every demonstration of woe and heart-rending affliction, mingled with invocations of the gods for the repose and happiness of the departed spirit, was exhibited at this sorrowful moment of final separation. Those who attended the funeral either walked or rode in a carriage; and if the deceased happened to be a person of consequence, they were all clad in white garments and decorated with garlands of flowers. According to the order of procession the men preceded the corpse in a grave and stately manner, and the women came behind covered with a veil called πέπλον, and uttering cries and lamentations. The women, however, should be either relatives of the deceased, or of an age prescribed by usage for attendance at funerals, which was not under sixty years. Of these some were employed in singing or directing the

funeral dirge, and are called by Homer *θρηνῶν ἑξαρχοι*, that is, the leaders of the funeral songs. We find a reference to this custom also in the Sacred Writings: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, and let them come; and send to them that are wise women, and let them make haste: Let them hasten and take up a lamentation for us; let our eyes shed tears, and our eyelids run down with water." (Jeremiah ix. 17.) The persons attending the funeral bore also in their hands certain gifts or relics, called *κόσμοι*, which were intended either for the dead, or the gods who were supposed to preside over the dead, and take charge of them in the other world. This custom may have prototyped in some measure that which prevails to some extent in our own day, of bringing flowers and placing them upon the graves of young persons. However, the ancient Greeks made a distinction between the honours paid to the dead, according to the age of the deceased, the greater honours being paid to the more advanced in years.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Mourning for the dead—Various manifestations of sorrow—
Similar practices observed by the Greeks and Israelites on
occasions of mourning.

THE cutting of the hair, or rather the shaving it off close to the head, was a sign of mourning among the ancients. Lysias, as reported by Aristotle in his Rhetorics, says in his speech for the men of Corinth who had died at Salamis when fighting against the Persians, "It would have been a deserved tribute of respect if all Greece had been shorn of her hair at the burial of those who had died at Salamis." There was a town in Cappadocia, called Comona, from *coma*, the hair, in commemoration of the hair of mourning which had been cut off in that place by Orestes and Iphigenia. We find evidence of the same practice in the Book of Job; and also in the prophet Jeremiah: "Cut off thy hair, and cast it away; and take up a lamentation on high; for the Lord hath rejected, and forsaken the generation of His wrath." (Jeremiah vii. 29.) Job, upon hearing of the death of his children, rent his garments, and shaved his head: "Then Job rose up, and rent his garments, and, having shaven his head, fell down upon the ground and worshipped." (Job i. 20.)

But we have also abundant evidence to show that the practice of cutting off the hair among the ancients was not alone a sign of mourning, but likewise of rejoicing. Whether there was any distinction in the manner in which this process was effected, that is, whether in the one case it was a shaving of the head, and in the other a mere cutting off of the locks of the hair, it is difficult to say; but the presumption is that such was the distinction. We find that Joseph, when he had come out of prison, cut off his hair, not for grief, but for joy; and the Romans, whenever they designed to excite pity, as in cases of trial in the presence of judges, were accustomed to let their hair grow long. *Aspice*, says Ovid, *demissos lugentis more capillos*; "See his hair hanging down like that of a man in mourning."

The Greeks too, let their hair grow long on occasions of sadness and dejection, as they cut it short on occasions of joy. Plutarch says that women manifested grief by cutting off their hair, and men by allowing it to grow long. It sometimes happened, however, that women, under the influence of sorrow, permitted their hair to grow, but took no care to have it neatly arranged, allowing it to fall in disorder around their neck and shoulders. *Capillus passus*, says Terence, *prolixus circum caput, rejectus negligenter*; "The hair was dishevelled, long, and negligently thrown around the head." It is evident from all this that there was no prescribed usage among the ancients in this respect, and that they acted according to individual taste or caprice, but always adopting the one course or the other; that is, either

allowing the hair to grow long and untrimmed, or shaving it off altogether, when under the influence of sorrow and dejection; or trimming it with care and an eye to propriety and elegance when under the contrary influence of joy and exaltation of spirits. However, on occasions of mourning it was deemed essential to use the strongest manifestations of self-negation, and to exhibit by external act the grief and affliction under which they laboured. Upon all occasions of calamity the near relations of the party who had met with the misfortune were wont to deny themselves the use of wine as being too exhilarating a beverage, and to confine themselves to a drink made of barley, called *ἄλφιτον κυκεὼν*. Like the Israelites they tore their clothes and hair; they smote their breasts and thighs; cut their hair, and disfigured their faces, throwing dust and ashes upon their heads; and raised loud lamentations, repeating in prolonged accents the interjectional word *ἔ, ἔ, ἔ, ἔ*. From this *ἔ* is derived the Greek word *ἔλεγος*, and hence our word *elegy*, a funeral song. The Romans borrowed a portion of their practice, in the manifestation of woe, from that which was followed by the Greeks; for we find that they too were in the habit of throwing dust upon the head and face,—

Pulvere canitiem genitor, vultusque seniles
Foedat humi fuso,

“And the aged sire begrimes his gray hairs with dust, while his face rests upon the ground.”

So excessive were the Greeks, and more particularly their women, in the indulgence of those external

infections proceeding from a sense of woe, that it became necessary for Solon to pass a law to restrain the practice within moderate limits. Cicero cites this law, thus: *Mulieres genas ne radunto, neve lessum funeris ergo habento*, "Let not the women, therefore, tear their cheeks, nor keep up the funeral wail." According to Euripides, it was the custom, as soon as the corpse was carried outside the house, for every one of the mourners to cut off a lock of the hair; and as the funeral procession moved along to the place of burial, all kept their heads and faces closely covered. We find examples of this practice, of covering the head as a sign of mourning, in Holy Writ: "And Mordecai returned to the palace gate; and Haman made haste to go to his house, mourning and having his head covered." (Esther vi. 12.) And again: "The great ones sent their inferiors to the water; they came to draw, they found no water, they carried back their vessels empty; they were confounded and afflicted, and covered their heads." (Jer. xiv. 3.) To place the hand upon the head was also a sign of mourning among them; as to lay the head upon the hand is with us. *Ἐπὶ γῆ κρατὶ χερὰς ἔθηκαν*, says Helen, in Euripides, in reference to the Trojans, "They placed their hands upon their heads." As the funeral procession advanced, the utmost order and regularity were observed; all was grave, solemn, and impressive; not a sound was heard save the deep, swelling, and melancholy dirge of the mourning women, until they came to the grave.

Then each cut off the *πλόκαμον*, or lock of hair, and laid it on the grave, or cast it into the fire. This

was the *πένθιμος κουρά*, or mourning lock ; or as it is usually called by the Greek writers, *ἀπαρχαί τῆς κομῆς*, the first-fruits of the hair. During the time of mourning, which was limited to the period of eleven days, the women were not allowed to wear jewellery ; and the use of fire and candle light was prohibited. If it were a case of public calamity, then were all the places of public resort and amusement closed up, and also the baths, shops, and temples. There was a particular gate in Athens, called the burial gate, because it led to the common burial-place ; and it was through this that the bodies of the dead were generally carried. There were two burial-places, or *κεραμεικοί*, as they were called, in Athens, one inside and the other outside the city ; the former was for those who died on the field of battle in defence of the honour and liberties of their country, and the latter for the general public.

It was the custom in early antiquity to bury kings and princes at the foot of a hill ; at least such would appear to be the natural inference from the observations of some of the ancient writers on this head ; but all others were buried in ordinary graves or caves.

CHAPTER L.

Remarkable resemblance between the Greeks and Irish in their funeral observances, and mourning for the dead.

PAUSING here, and looking back at the general characteristics which marked the manners of the ancient Greeks in relation to the dead, and to their proceedings at wakes and funerals, we cannot fail to observe the similarity which those bear to the manners and customs of some of the nations of Europe, even at the present day. But for myself, I am here especially reminded of some of the time-honoured practices and ceremonies of the Irish people with respect to their treatment of the dead. Among the Irish the custom of purification, that is, of washing the corpse, of closing the mouth and eyes, and extending the limbs, and tying them with bands, has been observed from the most remote times up to the present day. The decent arrangement of the couch on which the corpse is placed, and the decorations with which both are set forth ; as well as the practice of turning the feet of the corpse towards the door at the time of removal from the house ; and the purification or washing of the corpse ; are observances as prevalent among the Irish Roman Catholics to-day, at least in some districts of Ireland, as they were among

the Greeks more than twenty centuries ago. Wailing for the dead, too, or *Coine*, as the Irish call it, is another remarkable point of similarity between the usages of the two nations. Not only do the immediate relatives of the deceased in Ireland raise the wail of lamentation around the corpse while lying in the house, and during its progress to the burial-place, but a hired mourner is employed to lead the chorus and to dilate upon the virtues and high qualities of the departed all the time. As with the Greeks, so it is the usage among the Irish to have this chorus of singers composed of women ; and the readiness and facility with which the leader or hired mourner gives forth her extemporaneous verses in praise of the departed is a subject calculated to astonish any one not acquainted with the poetic vein which so peculiarly characterizes the Irish mind. This leader is not necessarily a hired woman ; if any relative of the deceased happens to be distinguished for this faculty of extemporaneous verse-making, she assumes this duty ; but in general it is assigned to a woman hired for the purpose, for she being unconnected with the deceased, and consequently uninfluenced by real sorrow, is supposed to be more capable of doing justice to the task she has undertaken. A man sometimes discharges this office when there is found one who has the desired faculty, and who has devoted himself to this profession ; for it is, or at least was, in some measure, a profession. Those were not educated persons ; on the contrary, they were remarkable for a total absence of education. I knew a woman of this class who resided in the neighbourhood

to which I belonged. She supported herself and daughter partly by the fruits of her funeral singing, or *Cointechaun*, as it is called, and partly by begging. She was a small, but thick-set and fresh-looking old woman ; and always wore a coarse blue cloak, with the hood generally drawn over her head and face. Beneath this, her head was covered by a neat white cap, with a pinched muslin border, and a red or parti-coloured silk kerchief tied over it. The cloak as well as the garments beneath it were very short, so that a pair of stout legs covered with coarse black stockings and terminated with a pair of stout, well-greased brogues, were visible to about midway between the knee and ankle. Her face was, as I have said, fresh-looking ; it was of an oval shape ; and was lighted with a pair of gray keen eyes, that kept constantly moving in their orbits. A rather stoutish nose, somewhat elevated about the middle ; a well-cut mouth with clenched lips, and a long chin, constituted the remaining features of her face entitled to notice. I often, when a small boy, met her on the road which led to the little village near which her humble cabin was situated ; when she would take me by the hand, and invoke ten thousand blessings on what she was pleased to call her " darlin' boy." Whenever I had a few pence in my pocket I would hand them out to her, and ask her to sing a *cointechaun* for me. She would clutch the money, and eyeing it with an affectionate curiosity, place it in her bosom ; then half closing her eyes, and swaying her body from side to side, she would commence a dirge in the Irish language expressive of the admiration and

respect which she entertained for myself and all the members of my family; and of the high and commanding qualities which her imagination suggested as being peculiarly our own. There was an extraordinary flow, and softness, and rich melody in her accents; and the modulation of her voice was governed in a most remarkable manner by the tenor of the ideas to which she gave utterance: it was sometimes brisk, forcible, and clear; sometimes slow, soft, and tremulous; and then again it rose into a wild harmonious swell, from which it gradually descended with a vibrating cadence until it died away into a low, sonorous murmur, like an expiring wind amid a grove of willows. Poor old Moll!—her name was Moll Connelly; how my heart rejoiced whenever I saw her round, squat, cosy figure, of a summer's evening, moving calmly and slowly along the mountain road that led to her little cabin at the mouth of the glen, with the declining sun throwing its rosy beams over her sedate features, and exhibiting her compact form in well-defined outline against the white blooming crest of the hawthorn hedge. She had long sustained her character as the best *cointechaun* woman of the parish; and full of years and honours she at length sank into the grave; and had the dirge and the wail, which her poor old spirit had loved so well, chanted over her by her only child, a daughter; on whose shoulders, however, the fates had not decreed that her mantle should fall.

CHAPTER LI.

Cremation, or the burning of the bodies of the dead, practised by the ancients—Ceremonies observed by the Greeks on occasions of this sort.

IT was the custom of the ancients to burn the bodies of the dead, and to consign their ashes to an urn. This was especially the case among the Greeks and Romans; but the Persians followed a different practice, for they esteemed it a profanation to consume their dead with fire. It is thought that the word *τύμβος*, tomb, was derived from this observance with respect to the bodies of the dead, *τύφειν*, signifying *to burn*.

The Romans, according to Quintilian, believed that the souls of the dead were purified by fire: "The soul, when freed from its mortal members and purified by fire, sought its abode among the stars." As to the Greeks, although they sometimes buried the bodies of their dead in the earth, yet this was esteemed a mark of infamy, or at least of some inferiority or degradation, in the persons whose remains were thus treated.

Infants, for instance, were not deemed worthy of cremation; and their bodies were consequently interred in the earth; and so it was with suicides, and

with such as were killed by lightning ; the latter, according to custom, being generally buried in the spot where they fell. Traitors were also subjected to the same degradation, their bodies being deemed unworthy the honour of cremation. The origin of this custom among the Greeks is ascribed to Hercules, who having bound himself by oath to one Lycimnius that he would bring back his son Argius safe to him, if he would allow him to accompany him to the war with Laomedon, fulfilled the obligation by bringing back his bones, the youth having been killed in battle. The religious belief on which the practice became afterwards founded was, that the soul being relieved from the heterogeneous materials by which in life it was surrounded, and of every stain produced by such polluting contact, which effect could only be produced by fire, it arose more buoyantly to its own sphere, and became fitted for the communion of the immortal gods. Thus they were believed to have been re-born or created over again by fire. The Sophists, or wise-men of India, observed this rite with respect to the dead ; and we find them asking Alexander, as the highest favour he could grant them, to permit them to burn themselves, that they might thereby secure the immortality which they sought. The ancients were not only impressed with the necessity of this mode of disposing of their dead, as it gave lightness and purity to the soul ; but they also viewed it as a graceful and dignified exit out of this world, inasmuch as the soul thus purified mounted upward in a chariot of fire, leaving all that was impure behind it on earth, and bearing only its

stainless beauty and revived splendour back to the mansions of the immortals.

The funeral pyre, or *πυρὰ*, as the Greeks called it, was a pile of wood erected to a convenient height, on the top of which the dead body was placed ; after which the wood was set on fire. Homer, in the description of the funeral pyre of Hector, says, " They placed the body on the top of the pyre, and then cast in the fire." The wood of which the pyre was composed was either oak, or olive, or pine, as we find it mentioned in the pages of the Greek writers ; but whether any peculiar consideration directed the choice in the wood to be used it is not easy to say ; although it is by no means unlikely that youth and age, condition in life, and personal qualities, may have had something to do with it. Those who had died by shipwreck had their funeral pyre constructed of the timbers of the wreck. During the time of burning the mourners stood around the fire, and invoked the winds to blow, that the body might be the more quickly consumed. A strong breeze springing up at the time of the cremation was looked upon as a good omen. The *κήρυξ*, or bellman, was in attendance all the time, for the purpose of preventing any one from touching the bones of the dead. When the body was burnt all to the bones, the nearest relation of the deceased, who was present, threw red wine upon the fire in order to quench it, and then the ashes were swept together into a heap. The bones were next taken out and washed in water, which was brought in vessels by the women employed in such rites ; after which they were anointed with ointments, and

with the fat of a sow ; and then wrapped up in fine linen, and placed in a coffin. This coffin was most commonly made of the wood of the cedar-tree, and was therefore sometimes called κέδρος. We find that it was the custom to have the husband and wife buried in the same grave, but it rarely happened that the bones of two bodies were placed in the same coffin ; although Pausanias informs us that the Megarensians often put the bones of as many as four bodies in one coffin. The bones thus preserved were called λείψανα, or relics, because *left* by the fire (λείπω—λείπειν, to leave). He who happened to die and to be burnt in a foreign land, had his bones or ashes conveyed home in a coffin ; and during this progress homeward the coffin was exhibited and decorated with garlands at every town and village on the route. In reference to this custom Ovid says,—

Ossa tamen facito parvo referuntur in urna
Sic ego non etiam mortuus exul ero.

“Take heed that my bones be brought home in a little urn, and that thus I shall not be an exile in death.”

When they came to cross-roads in this journey homeward, it was usual with the kindred of the deceased to keep a feast, in honour of the gods who were supposed to preside over cross-roads. Upon its arrival at its destination it was placed in the sepulchre of the family, and invoked three times, according to the custom to which I have already referred.

CHAPTER LII.

Tombs, inscriptions, and sacrifices in honour of the dead—
Garlands of flowers, and other decorations of the graves of
the dead.

THE ancients very much affected tombs and monumental inscriptions; and they were wont, as is the custom in our own day, to select a place of burial before their death, which they appropriated to themselves by marking it with a black stone. When the body or the ashes of the dead were interred, the mound or tomb was raised above them, which was costly or otherwise according to the quality of the deceased. Upon this mound was inscribed the name and qualities of the party; which inscription was called *γνώρισμα*, or epitaph. The Spartan soldiers, as Justin informs us, were accustomed to tie a small piece of writing around their wrists, in order to intimate to those who should find them, if they had fallen in the field of battle, who and of what condition they were, that their bodies might thereby be honoured with a suitable tomb and epitaph. After the earth was thrown upon the grave, the sacrifice was offered, and an invocation made that the earth might press lightly upon the deceased. The Chorus in Euripides exclaims, in reference to Alcestis, "May the earth rest

light over you, woman." The Romans practised a similar invocation, and *Sit tibi terra levis*, "May the earth be light upon you," was pronounced over the graves of their dead with the same intensity of feeling as was indicated by the similar invocation of the Greeks.

This form of expression is indeed common among ourselves as a part of the phraseology used in connexion with our pious aspirations for the ease and repose of the dead. In sacrificing to the gods of the nether world, as in the case of the dead, the custom was to cut out a trench or ditch for the altar, upon which the victim was offered. This victim was either a barren cow or a black sheep; the meaning intended thereby being that the dead should not have any beast as an offering which was capable of producing life; and that the colour most agreeable to the gods below was black, or that which approached as near as possible to darkness. The hair which grew on the forehead of the victim was plucked out and offered at the same time; as was also the hair of the mourners, of which mention has been already made. But the offering of hair was not confined even to this, for the hair on the forehead of living animals was also cut off and offered with the rest. Of this custom Herodotus gives an instance in the proceeding of Mardonius and his army at the funeral of Masistius; as there are many instances of the same kind given by others of the Greek writers.

Besides the sacrifice there were also drink-offerings, or *Xoai*, as they were called, consisting of wine, milk, and honey. Those who officiated in this part of the

ceremony went around the grave pouring out the libation, and addressing speeches to the deceased, and also prayers and invocations to the gods and the ghosts of the dead to be propitious to the soul of the deceased. This libation was also poured on the top of the grave, the celebrant standing thereon. In Euripides we find the words of the speech or invocation addressed to the soul of Achilles on the occasion of his funeral obsequies : " O son of Peleus, thou, my father, accept my libations, these propitiatory offerings of the dead." Of course these offerings, as well as all the other rites performed in honour of the dead, were made, as noticed before, by the kindred of the deceased. The deep devotion and solemn feeling which characterize the manners of the ancient Greeks in their ceremonies as connected with the dead, cannot fail to impress us with the fulness and extent of their religious principles, and the grandeur of their conceptions as to a future state. Their creed was not a cold and sterile belief in a mere existence beyond the present scene, uninfluenced by considerations of its joys or terrors ; no, but it was one that glowed in all the ardour of an enthusiasm that lifted up the mind to a contemplation of the mystery of existence, and wafted the soul high amid the splendours and the glories of a boundless future. Their religion was that of the heart ; it was warm, ardent, enthusiastic ; it held communion with the immortal occupants of eternity ; and while, in its temporal aspect, it rested upon this earth as the scene of its predestined strifes and struggles, it reposed its brow upon the golden throne of an immortal destiny, an imperishable

futurity. This religion of the Greeks was truly the nursery of the Muses; it was here surely the poet found his purest inspiration, and the orator his highest conceptions of eloquence.

It has been already stated that it was the custom of the Greeks to bedeck the grave with garlands, and to cast flowers, herbs, and green branches upon it. The herb parsley was in especial use for this purpose; and we read that when Timoleon was marching to fight the Carthaginians, he met mules laden with this herb, whereupon his soldiers, taking the alarm which the event inspired, being aware of the use to which this herb was applied, refused to advance upon the enemy. But he removed the disheartening impression from their minds by representing to them that parsley was as much a sign of victory as of death, inasmuch as it symbolized the triumph which the good man achieves over the world, and its trials and cares. In fact this custom of the Greeks originated in the feeling of triumph; in that sense of victory which the liberated spirit of the dead has won over the tyranny of the world; and as in their athletic and other exercises it was their wont to crown the victor with flowers and green boughs, so in the last and greatest victory, that which is accomplished over the world itself, the same indications of triumph were adopted, and the garland crown became a sign and a symbol. The Romans celebrated the obsequies of the dead in the manner of the Greeks; and strewed their graves with leaves and flowers, and branches, in the same spirit of symbolic significance. *Ad sepulchrum ferunt frondes*, says Varro; "they bring leaves to strew upon the graves."

This custom has descended to us from the ancients, and we retain it to the present day, more especially with reference to the graves of young virgins. Garlands of flowers, natural and artificial, evergreens, and sweet-smelling herbs, are decorations which meet and delight the eye in the places of the dead in most countries of Europe and America at the present day. No custom can be more indicative than this of man's spiritual supremacy over the material and grovelling propensities of human nature, or afford more cheering evidence of the living principle of faith which regards this world as a mere probationary resting-place, whence the soul passes through paths of grace, and love, and holiness to the glorious realms of eternal life. It is a custom at once retrospective and prospective in its suggestions; it not only brings the past and present forcibly to our view, with all their attendant toils, and cares, and vanities, and unstable nature, but it also projects our minds and hearts into the future realms of light, and hope, and life imperishable. It keeps the memory of the dead alive and fresh in our bosoms, while it couples with it a still brighter and holier memory—that of the immortal soul living in a world that shall never pass away. It calls us out of ourselves and beyond ourselves, to the contemplation of our true life, of our first beginning, of our last end; and is to us a constant, but yet sweet monitor of the perishable nature of all worldly ties and interests, and of the joy, and bliss, and permanence, which are the characteristics of God's kingdom. No custom could be better calculated than this to revive in us those solemn thoughts which speak and breathe of

our origin and future destiny, and which opens to us a vista through which the soul, as it were, glances into those scenes of eternity for which it was created, and into which it must shortly pass, whether for an immortality of happiness or an immortality of woe.

To decorate the graves of deceased relatives and friends with flowers and evergreens, and to strew over them and around them fragrant herbs and leaves, was a practice that could only originate in the most lively sentiments of holy faith in a future existence. It was an act on which the spirit of the living manifested its impulsive tendency towards that of the dead, and its aspiration to mingle its pure essence with that of the free and disengaged spirit that had flung the mortal coil from around it. It was surely a practice that tended to purify and elevate the soul, and to lead it into contact and close alliance with its Omnipotent Creator. It drew the mind and heart away from terrestrial interests and contemplation, and wrapt the soul in a transport of mingled hope, and joy, and melancholy, which gave it at once a loftiness of thought and a dignity of suffering, which enabled it to regard the future state with an unwavering purpose, and to look upon the present as a passing scene where there is nothing firm, certain, or lasting. This concentration of attention and devotion, which marks the Grecian custom of burial, is certainly the most striking evidence that could be given of the source whence sprang that elasticity and brilliancy of mind, and depth and richness of feeling, which characterize the wonderful productions which have given immortality to that extraordinary people. None but a people far

exalted above the grovelling feelings and practices of a mere animal life could invest the works of the intellect with a character of enduring vitality, or give such an impulse to the world of mind as to fashion it to their own views, and laws, and principles, and direct it in the path of their own glory. The impress of Greece is stamped upon the mind of the world to-day, and it is but fair to presume that so shall it be to the end of time.

CHAPTER LIII.

Public orations, and funeral feasts in honour of the dead.

IT was a custom among the Greeks to erect a pillar at or near the grave, and sometimes an image either of the party deceased, or of some person, or animal, or thing, intended to represent him. We learn that the image at the grave of Diogenes was that of a dog, he having been a Cynic philosopher, and his life having been spent in carping objections against the ways of the world ; while that of Isocrates was a syren, which was considered a suitable representation of the winning eloquence of the orator. A funeral oration in praise of the deceased was also pronounced at the grave—a custom which has reached to our time. If the deceased had died in battle, this oration was pronounced by a person appointed by the magistrate for that purpose, and who was generally a near relative of the deceased ; and it was repeated once every year afterward. Cicero speaks of the custom in these words : " It is the custom among the Athenians to honour by a public oration, in the presence of an assembly, those who have been slain in battle ; a custom so much in favour, that it becomes necessary to repeat it on the same day in every year." It is said that this custom originated with Pericles, who pronounced

an oration upon those who had fallen in the Peloponnesian war. There were plays also enacted upon those occasions, called funeral plays, as well as feasts in honour of the dead. After the mourners had returned home from the funeral, they commenced a lustration, or a purifying of the house, as well as of themselves ; which was done by burning brimstone, and sprinkling with water, and passing through fire. After this was held the funeral feast, at which they wore garlands and white dresses, and which was renewed at the expiration of nine days afterward, and again at the expiration of thirty days or a month, when a sacrifice was offered to the god Mercury, that he might lead the soul of the departed to the regions of the blest. It was afterwards renewed once a year, and called *νεκύσια*, or the feast of the dead, as the annual feast in honour of the birth-day was called *γενέσια*, or birth-feast. Throughout all these ceremonies in honour of the dead there was no person permitted to participate in them who was an enemy to the deceased ; nor was such a person even allowed to go near the grave. So Sophocles represents Ulysses as having been forbidden to approach the grave of Ajax ; and Cicero says that such was the sanctity ascribed to the rites performed for the dead, that even a stranger was not suffered to have any thing to do with them, lest he might be an enemy. If the deceased left a wife and children behind him, they were immediately committed to the protection of the Archon, or chief magistrate, who, in the case of the wife, was to take care that she should not imprudently contract a second marriage ; and with respect to the

children, that a suitable tutor should be provided for them, such a person as was not of kin to the deceased, or was at least so far removed that the succession of the inheritance should not fall to him in the event of the death of the child or children. The tutor was what was called *παιδων κύριος*, that is, he had not only the charge of the education of the children, but was invested with full authority to manage and transact all affairs connected with their interests, until they arrived at the age of twenty years. They were then competent, according to law, to take in hand the management of their own affairs, without hindrance or restraint.

CHAPTER LIV.

High religious feeling of the Greeks—Temples of the gods, regarded as asylums of security for criminals—Privilege of sanctuary.

I HAVE spoken of the religion of the Greeks as pervading all their thoughts, sentiments, and feelings in the various relations of life, and as influencing their conduct throughout every phase of their existence. The keen and wakeful conception which was ever present to their minds of the omnipresence and superintendence of their numerous divinities, and of the providence by which these presided over and regulated the government of the world, gave to their religion that vivacity of feeling and intensity of moral sensibility which form the most striking features in their character as a nation. They not only believed that there was a future state where the rewards of exquisite happiness were provided for the just, and punishments adapted and proportioned to their crimes awarded to the wicked; but they anticipated the future by their belief in the special providential regulations, as to rewards and punishments, provided for by their gods in the present state. In short, it was their creed that every act of transgression against the laws of the gods was avenged in this life; and

that there was thus a special as well as a general and all-pervading providence, which affected not only the guilty but even those who permitted the guilt to go unpunished. The sacredness, however, with which they regarded the special interference of the gods in the affairs of this world was such that what they otherwise deemed a crime deserving of immediate and present punishment became obliterated, as it were, or at least withdrawn for the moment from the category of crime, as soon as the interposition of the gods in behalf of the criminal became manifest. Thus we find that, when an offender of any kind sought protection in the temples of the gods, all human law became suspended, and the person of the culprit became inviolable. This was the case also to a certain extent, even as regarded the intercession of men ; for, if a slave who had been ill-treated by his master sought the protection of men, his person became sacred, and he could not be dragged away from the asylum into which he had entered. But to force an entrance into the temples of the gods which had been set apart for the protection of the fugitives, to violate the sanctity of those *ἄσυλοι*, as they were termed, by forcing from their sacred portals the unhappy wretches who had sought shelter there, was an offence of no ordinary magnitude ; an offence which was punishable by the ostracism or exilement of the party committing it. Euripides represents Polydorus, who contemplated this protection against his enemies, exclaiming, "The altars of the gods are near me." If a criminal were convicted by the law, and the sentence of death even pronounced against him, his escape to

the altar afforded him safety, and the person who dared to drag him forth, and to lay violent hands upon him while thus beneath the sacred Ægis of the gods, was esteemed guilty of his blood. There were six temples in Athens which possessed this privilege of sanctuary, namely, the temple of Misericordia, that of Minerva, that of the Eumenides, that of Munichia, and the two temples of Theseus, one of which stood inside and the other outside of the city walls. It is said that the temple of Misericordia was the first that was ever erected for this purpose, and that it was the work of the grandsons of Hercules, who wished to protect themselves against their enemies: "After Hercules had left the earth," says Servius, "his grandchildren, fearing the treachery of those whom their grandfather had made to suffer, were the first who established an asylum, that is, a temple of mercy, in Athens, whence no one could be forced away."

This institution of privilege of sanctuary became afterwards common among the nations of the earth, and was continued down even to a comparatively recent period, when the change of manners and the varying light of philosophy exhibited it as inadequate to the preservation of social order and the moral necessities of mankind.

According to the laws, however, which regulated the observances of this institution among the Greeks, it was permitted that the refugee might be forced out of the temple by means of fire: that is, a fire might be lighted at any aperture of the temple which presented itself for the purpose, and thus the culprit compelled by the smoke and heat to leave the asylum.

But this expulsion was not regarded in a favourable light by the people, and was not therefore often resorted to. No crime was deemed so heinous as to justify the violation of the right of sanctuary ; for we read that, when the followers of Cylon had plundered the temple of Minerva, and were afterwards arrested at the altar and murdered, the perpetrators of this deed of blood were thenceforth held in detestation by the people, and branded with the name of ἀλιτῆριοι, that is, sacrilegious scoundrels, as we should express it. In seeking the protection of the sanctuary, it was usual with supplicants to appear with garlands tied round their necks, or green boughs in their hands. These boughs were either of the olive or laurel-tree, and were interspersed with wreaths of wool, and called εἰσειώναι, or wreathed laurel-boughs. The Romans followed the same practice ; for we find Virgil alluding to it in these words, *Famque oratores aderant ex urbe Latina velati ramis oleæ veniamque rogantes*, " And now the supplicants came from the Latin city covered with olive-branches, and asking pardon."

The people of Rhodes observed the same custom, according to the testimony of Livy. The reason assigned for the use of the laurel and olive on those occasions is, that these trees are not subject to decay, and are therefore suggestive of purity, sacredness, and inviolability ; and, furthermore, that the laurel is an emblem of victory or success, and the olive of peace and benevolence. With these boughs the supplicants, in pressing their suit for an asylum, touched, in cases of doubt, the knees of the man whose

protection they sought, or of the statue of the god to whose temple they had recourse ; but where they felt inspired with hope of a kind reception, they touched the hands of the objects of their solicitation ; and where confidence of security possessed their minds, the chin and cheeks were the parts they touched. Such, at least, are the accounts with which some of the Greek writers furnish us.

When supplication was made to men of high quality, it was usual for the suppliant to stoop down and kiss his feet ; an instance of which we find in the case of an appeal to Cyrus, as related by Xenophon : " They kissed the hands and feet of Cyrus." In cases of exile and escape from danger, the refugee always made for the hearth of the person from whom he sought protection, and there crouched within the shelter of the Penates, or household gods. In this position he felt himself secure from all danger, for it would be deemed an act of sacrilege to lay violent hands upon him while thus within the sacred precincts of the hearth, or to drag him from the shielding arms of its gods. *Nihil sanctius*, says Cicero, *nihil omni religione munitius, quam domus uniuscujusque civium. Hic aræ sunt, hic foci, hic dii penates, hic sacræ religionis ceremoniæ continentur ; hoc perfugium est ita sanctum omnibus, ut inde arripi neminem fas sit ;* " There is nothing more sacred, nothing more secure by every principle of religion, than the house of every citizen. Here is the altar, here the hearth, here are the household gods ; and here are kept the sacred ceremonies of religion : this is to all a place of refuge so holy that it is unlawful to force any one

by violence from it." When offenders fled to the temples of the gods for protection, they took with them garlands, with which they crowned the altars, and then prayed that their safety might be ensured. In like manner supplicants implored for aid or assistance in cases of distress or affliction. When invoking the favour of the gods, their custom was to raise the arms towards heaven, and let the hands drop downward, resting upon the wrist.

There was kept in the temple a register, for the purpose of recording the different cases in which parties succeeded in obtaining their requests; and which was kept by the priest of the temple, the parties either making the entry themselves, or testifying to its correctness.

CHAPTER LV.

Offerings and sacrifices to the gods—The three classes of Divinities.

THE offerings to the gods were of two kinds, that is, free-will offerings, or such as were made in fulfilment of vows; and obligatory offerings, or such as they were commanded by the oracle to make on special occasions. Their gods were divided into three classes; namely, those under the ground, those on the ground, and those above the ground; or, as they were called, *ὑποχθόνιοι*, *χθόνιοι*, and *οὐράνιοι*; and their altars and modes of sacrifice and offering were arranged in accordance with this distinction. The altar erected to the subterranean gods was made in a hollow or ditch, and called *ἐσχάρα*; that to the celestial gods was raised on a mound of earth, and called *βωμὸς*; while the terrestrial gods had altars of a construction similar to that of the subterranean deities. The Romans observed the same distinction as to their gods and altars, and *ara* and *altare* were the names which they assigned respectively to the altars of the subterranean and celestial gods; the one being derived from *aro*, *arare*, to plough, because it was ploughed or scooped out in the earth, and the other from *altus*, lofty, because it was raised above

the earth. The form of the *βωμός*, or celestial altar of the Greeks, was a square, an oblong, or a circle, but generally the last. The circle was a figure of which they seem to have been particularly fond, for their market-places, theatres, and even tables, were all of a circular form. The material of which the altar was composed was either earth, stone, or wood; if the first, it was always mixed or tempered with blood. They were usually erected on mountains or elevated places, as being thereby considered nearer to the celestial or Olympian gods; those consecrated to the terrestrial and subterranean divinities being, on the contrary, established in valleys or low grounds, from a similar motive of propinquity. The time of sacrifice was either the morning or the evening; the former when the celestial gods and heroes were to be worshipped, and the latter when any other divinity was the object of adoration. The subjects of sacrifice were either living creatures, such as bulls, goats, sows, and rams; or inanimate things, such as corn and flour; or liquids, such as wine, honey, and milk. Although the opinions of some of the ancient philosophers were against the shedding of blood for the purposes of sacrifice, yet the general feeling of antiquity was in favour of the grand offering of a whole-burnt sacrifice, consisting of a bull, ram, sow, and goat.

CHAPTER LVI.

Oaths and asseverations—Abjurations and the ordeal by fire.

THE mode of fortifying declarations, or giving assurance of the fidelity of promises and engagements among the Greeks, in other words, their system of oath-taking and swearing, was two-fold. There was, first, the great oath, or μέγας ὄρκος, which was that of men swearing by the gods, or of gods swearing by the Stygian Lake; and second, the small oath, μικρός ὄρκος, which was when they swore by some creature, such as a dog, a goose, a ram, or the like, or by something inanimate, as the ground on which they stood, the nets which they were in the act of using, or any thing of the same kind. The μέγας ὄρκος, or great oath, is represented as having been invented by Jupiter, the father of the gods, and prescribed by him to be taken by the rest of the gods at the time he was aided by Styx and his sons in repelling the invasion of the Titans, who attempted to dethrone him. The belief in connexion with this oath was that if any of the gods violated it, he was punished in the lower regions for nine thousand years. It was usual on the part of mortals to accompany the oath with an imprecation of evil to some person or thing which they held dear to them; as in the case of

Telemachus, in Homer, where he swears by Jupiter and the sorrows of his father. This was to give greater corroboration to the truth, by showing that, if they violated their oaths, they were willing not only to bear the due punishment themselves, but also to involve their nearest and dearest relatives and friends in the consequences of their offence.

The oath taken by women was by Juno, and my Lady Diana. Although the oath usually taken by men, as being of the greatest weight, and being that especially prescribed by Solon, was the adjuration by Jupiter; yet they were accustomed to swear by the other gods, or by heroes who had lately fallen in battle, as Demosthenes swore by τοὺς ἐν Μαραθῶνι, those who fell in the battle of Marathon. They sometimes swore by the gods, not specifying any of them, and sometimes by the twelve gods; as the Spartans did by the two gods, Castor and Pollux. They very frequently adapted their oaths to the particular business about which they were employed at the time of taking it; as in the market-place they swore by Mercury, he being the presiding deity of traffic. To swear by an oath was also common among them, as μὰ τὸν ὄρκον, by my oath.

In taking an oath, that is, the μὴ ὄρκος, or great oath, the gods are represented as lifting up their hands, but men as placing their hands upon the altar; whereas, in taking the small oath, which was the oath of one man to another, to seal a promise or bargain, the party so taking it placed his hand on the hand of the other party. The solemn oaths taken by the gods were generally attended with sacrifice, that is,

of a ram, boar, and goat, the three being immolated together, or three of either.

The pig was a favourite subject of sacrifice among the Greeks, as well as the Romans ; for it was believed that the first sacrifice ever offered among them was that of a sow, and that the Father of the Gods was nursed by a sow. Unlike the custom at all other sacrifices, the flesh was not eaten in that of a pig, but was buried in the earth.

In acts of abjuration and purging of crimes it was usual with the parties to creep upon their hands through the fire, or to hold a red-hot iron in their hands, being persuaded that their innocence of the crime attributed to them would operate as a charm against the effects of those instruments of torture. This reminds us of the ordeal by fire which was so prevalent in England, as well as in other countries of Europe, in former times. We read of Emma, the mother of Edward the Confessor, walking blindfold through red-hot ploughshares, in order to purge herself of the charge of adultery ; and also of Kunigund, the wife of the emperor Henry the Second, taking a red-hot iron in her hand, with the same object ; both escaping, as we are told, unhurt. It was also customary among the Athenians, on such occasions, to take a piece or bar of iron, and throw it into the sea, declaring at the same time that they would keep their oath as long as the sea kept the iron without floating. They sometimes wrote the oath on a piece of paper, and threw it into the water ; if it floated, it was a sign that the oath taken was true ; but if it sank, the party taking the oath was punished, as having sworn falsely.

A strict and conscientious observer of an oath was esteemed a *religious* man among the Greeks, and was indicated by that epithet ; so much so, indeed, that a religious man and a keeper of an oath meant the same thing, *εὐορκος* and *εὐσεβὴς* being two terms expressive of one idea. But a man of very great wickedness was indicated by the contrary idea, that of an oath-breaker, *ἐπίορκος* ; or, as we would express it, perjurer. Common swearers and oath-breakers were held in great abhorrence by the Athenians ; so much so, that there was an established belief among them that the Furies made periodical visits, five days only intervening between them, for the purpose of punishing such base and wicked persons.

CHAPTER LVII.

Convivial habits of the Greeks—Their public entertainments—
The forms and ceremonies observed at feasts—Resemblance between the Greeks and Romans in their festive ceremonies.

IT was a common saying among the ancients that when an Athenian was dying he stretched out his hand (*Atticus moriens porrigit manum*), to indicate the spirit of hospitality which governed his life. To be *as merry as a Greek* was another mode of expression of the same quality.

When Demosthenes was going into exile the Athenians flocked around him, and attended him a part of the way, each bestowing upon him some gift or present by which to express their love and admiration of him, and the benevolent and generous feelings by which they were actuated; whereupon, parting from them, he said, "How can I bear to leave such a city where even enemies are such as you cannot find friends elsewhere." The Athenians indeed were remarkable for their cheerful and convivial habits. They loved eating and drinking for the sake of the social feelings which were produced thereby, and the gay and merry conversations which were wont to enliven the festive board. Like most people whose taste is formed on a similar model, they delighted in

the propagation of idle reports, and in the dissemination of scandal. They loved to hear and report every kind of news, and to adapt it to the circumstances of the passing hour, without troubling themselves as to its truth or falsehood. The Baths, Smithies, Porches or public Halls, Perfumers' shops, and Barbers' shops, were the usual places of resort, where scandals of every kind were wont to be retailed. The better classes frequented the baths and public halls, and the others the shops just mentioned. It was a common saying among them when they intended to express the idea of a vague or unfounded tale, that it was only *κουρικὴ λαλιά* barbers' talk. The philosophers, or learned men, however, held their social meetings, which were of a different kind; for they conversed on high subjects, and discussed topics of commanding interest. Their places of resort were consecrated to the god Apollo, and were frequented in the day time.

The set meals among the Greeks were at first held but once a day, as among the Romans, and that in the evening; but afterwards, it is thought, they held as many as four such meals in the course of the day; namely, breakfast, dinner, evening meal, and supper. At the time appointed for each meal a bell was rung in the market-place; whence came the saying among them, in reference to lovers of good fare, *κώδωνος ὀξέως ἄκουντες*, to have sharp ears for the bell. The Greeks appear to have been much given to that description of entertainment which was made up by the contributions of the individuals who wished to join in it. It was such another form of conviviality



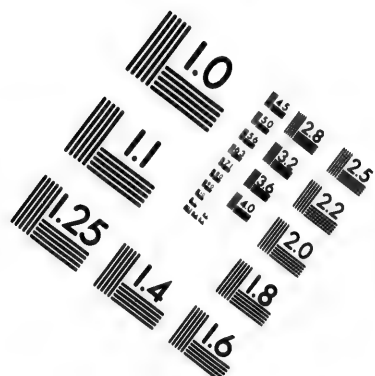
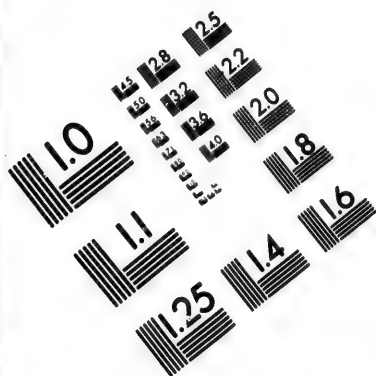
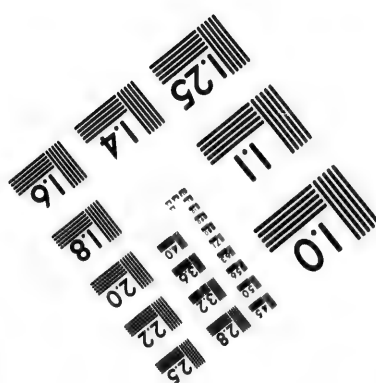
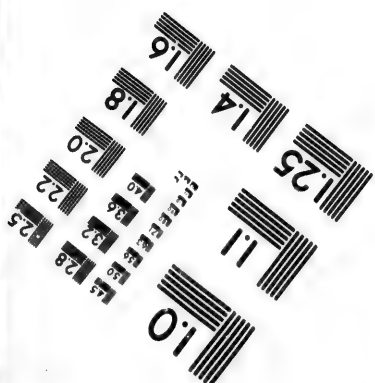
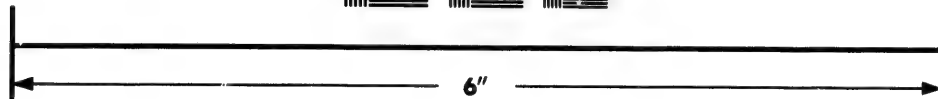
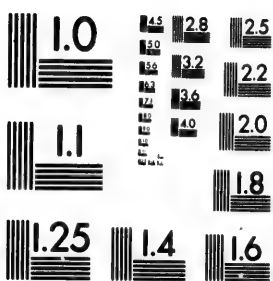


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as that which prevails among us at the present day, called a subscription party. Each put in a certain pledge, generally a ring, to the Master of Ceremonies, or the person appointed to provide the entertainment ; so that if he neglected paying his allotted portion of the expense, or did not come to the feast, the ring (*συμβολή*) might be sold for that purpose. This kind of entertainment was designated by the name of *ἔρανος*. Another description of entertainment was that called *εἰλαπίνη*, which was more costly in its circumstances, and was probably for the better classes of citizens. The Athenian entertainments differed from those of the Romans in this important respect, that while the women were participators in the feasts of the latter, they were forbidden to be present at those of the former, except a few who accompanied their near relatives. The company at those entertainments was limited, thirty being the greatest number allowed, according to custom. There were certain officers appointed to preside over the feast, and to see that this regulation should not be infringed. There was also an officer appointed, called *οἰνοπότης*, whose business it was to attend to the distribution of the wine, and to see if any person became *ἄσωτος* (intemperate), in which case he was to be handed over to the Areopagus for punishment. The profession of a cook was held in high honour among the Greeks ; which appears evident enough from the fact, that the knowledge of physics, geometry, and astronomy was deemed an essential portion of the acquirements of that profession.

When the Greeks arrived at a place of entertain-

ment it was usual with them to salute each other, the form of which, as in all other cases of salutation, was either by kissing or embracing. They kissed either the eyes, the forehead, the neck, or shoulder; or sometimes they merely kissed the hand, and then embraced the body. The former was the mode of salutation prevalent among the Jews. The word used in salutation was *τίμιε* (worthy man, or worthy sir). The period intervening between the arrival of the guests and the commencement of the feast was occupied by them in admiring and praising the furniture, ornaments, and accommodations of the house. After some time the cook handed the bill of fare, or *γραμματίδιον*, as it was called, to the Master of Ceremonies, who was called *δειπνοκλήτωρ*; and presently the feast commenced. In some cases, that is, on occasions of particular festivities, when a greater scope of enjoyment and high revelry was expected, a *βασιλεὺς*, or king, was selected by lot to preside over the entertainment; and to him was given full and absolute control over the entire proceedings, that is, as to the ceremonies to be observed, and the extent of carousing to be indulged in. During the whole time of the feast frankincense and myrrh were kept burning on the hearth, both for the gratification of the olfactory nerves of the guests, and as a propitiatory offering to the gods, to whom the choicest morsel of each dish was also first presented. Before the guests sat down they crowned their heads with garlands, which were usually made of myrtle boughs.

The Romans observed the same custom, according to Horace, *Nunc decet aut viridi caput impedire*

myrto, "Now it is proper to bind the head with green myrtle." It was also usual both with the Greeks and Romans to anoint the head before the commencement of a feast—*habent unctæ mollia sarta comæ*, "soft garlands rest on the anointed hair"—and to wash both before and after meal. The object of washing, anointing, and wearing garlands upon the head was to counteract the effects of the wine, by keeping the skin cool, and opening its pores for the escape of the heat and fumes arising from the indulgence of the feast. Their posture at table was not that of sitting, as with us, but of lying or reclining, as was practised by the Romans afterwards in imitation of them. They did not use seats or benches at table, but beds called *κλίνας*, such as those used by the Romans called *lecti*; and near these were *ψίαθαι*, or mats, with bed-clothes; so that whenever they felt so disposed, they might compose themselves to sleep. Those reclining beds were covered either with the skins of animals or with tapestry, the latter being used by the better sort of people. In this recumbent posture they rested upon their elbows, with their feet placed upon a footstool. The table was supported on three legs, and thence called *τρίπους*, or tripod; and upon it was placed what was called *δλμος*, which was a sort of cup, in imitation of that which stood upon the oracular table at Delphos, and which might be put on and taken off as they pleased. This they appear to have treated with great reverence, as while it stood upon the table all profanation of discourse was strictly and religiously forbidden.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Food of the Greeks in early times—Introduction of wine—
Toasts or healths—Carousals, or drinking bouts—Wedding
or bridal cakes—Music, dancing, and songs at feasts.

IN very remote times the Greeks, we are told, lived upon the fruit of the oak and beech trees, that is, masts and acorns ; in allusion to which Aulus Gellius says, *Quoniam cibus victusque antiquissimus quernus capi solitus sit*, "as their most ancient food was taken from the oak-tree." Of cereal food, that made of barley was first brought into use. The mode by which, at the commencement, they converted corn into food when mills were unknown, was to roast or parch it on the fire, and then to pound it into a dough. This mode of preparation was also in use among the Israelites, for we read that when David had come to the camp they "brought him beds and tapestry, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and meal, and parched corn, and beans, and lentils, and fried pulse." (2 Kings xvii. 28.) The Greeks never used the brains of an animal for food ; against this they had a most decided aversion, for they regarded it as a sort of desecration which none but men afflicted with insanity could be guilty of. As the source and

centre of life and sense, it was, in their estimation, a violation of the first law of nature, to use, for the gratification of any of the senses, that from which they all proceeded, and without which they could not exist.

But the entrails of animals was a favourite and dainty dish with them, and one to which epicures particularly inclined. Their dishes and platters were made either of wood or brass; the former being those used by the inferior classes, and the latter by the better description of people; and each person was supplied with his portion of food in the place where he reclined. The drink used during the repast was wine and water. A curious story is told by Athenæus as to the origin of this mixed drink; it is this: After Bacchus had brought the vine from the shores of the Red Sea into Greece, and when he first converted the grape into liquid, the people flocked to his vineyard and indulged in copious draughts; when they became intoxicated, and ran about like madmen. In the meantime a shower of rain came on, and the wine in the cups that had been left by the first drinkers became mingled with the rain-water, so that those who afterward came and drank of it experienced no intoxicating or maddening influence from the draught. Hence arose the custom of using the *κεκρασμένον*, or mixed wine, at table. The drinking of toasts, or healths, was also usual at repasts; the first being that to Jupiter (*Ζεὺς Σωτήρ*), as being the source and creator of rain, of which the favourite drink was compounded. On occasions of the celebration of a victory the leading toast was

Zeus Ὀλύμπιος (Olympian Jupiter) ; but at a wedding it was Ὠραῖος γάμος (the beautiful bride).

Immediately after the meal, or, as we express it, after the removal of the cloth, the pure wine was brought in ; and then commenced the carousal. The great bowl, or crater, was filled, and the *συμποσιάρχης*, or Master of the Feast, gave the health of the *good Genius* in whose honour the celebration was made ; or of *Bacchus*, the god of wine. This toast of the good Genius was given and received with a sort of religious solemnity ; and ὦ δαίμων ἀγαθέ, "O good Genius," was repeated in the spirit of an invocation. The last health that was drunk, which was at bedtime, was that to Mercury ; which was intended as an offering for the procuration of a refreshing sleep, and of pleasant dreams.

The *ἄσκος*, or bottle which contained the wine, was made of the skin of a male swine ; and was thence called *κάπρος*, or wild boar ; as the wine itself was called *αἶμα* (blood), and the pouring of the wine *σφάγια* (slaughter). When one toasted the health of another, it was called *φιλάτεια κύλιξ* (the cup of friendship), and the act itself *δεξίωσις*, that is, pledging. This is analogous to the phraseology used in the present day on similar occasions. When the master, or giver of the entertainment, if a man of high condition, drank to his favourite friend, he handed him the cup to keep ; but if he drank to one whom he loved, that is to his *ἐρωμάνῳ*, or *φίλῳ*, he drank part of the cup himself, and threw the rest upon the ground. The Greeks, we find, indulged in what we sometimes call *drinking bouts*, that is, they drank for a wager.

This trial of strength in wine-bibbing was usually entered into after supper ; and he who was the conqueror in it, that is, he who was able to keep himself waking until morning, was rewarded with a cake made of flour and honey, called *πυραµοῦς*. In the course of this contest it was usual to have riddles proposed ; and whoever was not able to solve them was compelled to drink off his cup. In this way the most acute in intellect were generally the victors, because they were not obliged to drink so much as the others, and consequently were able to keep awake for a longer time. The cups out of which they drank were first made out of the horns of a bull, and were thence called *κέρατα*, but afterward of the ivy wood, and called *ποτήρια κίσσινα*.

To spit, or cough, or speak loudly at table, was considered indecent, and not to be tolerated ; although, strange to say, it would appear that the higher orders, or gentlemen, were not only permitted these practices, but were even regarded as entitled to manifest their superiority in this way. But to pare the nails at table was entirely prohibited as an offence against all propriety and gentlemanly conduct. We are told that at table each person had his footboy, or *παῖς*, as he was termed, to whom he conveyed, generally in a secret manner, such choice bits and dainties as he wished to have carried home for him. This, however, was not looked upon as a creditable act, except at public feasts ; and, therefore, it was done in as secret a manner as possible. At public feasts, indeed, there was no discredit attached to the thing, and consequently it was openly practised.

It is necessary to observe that it was an established custom among the Greeks, at their public feasts, to send to their absent friends a part of the choicest dishes; not in a clandestine manner, but openly, and as a matter of course. This was especially the case at feasts accompanying a sacrifice, and also at wedding feasts. In this latter instance the custom was analogous to that which prevails at the present time among ourselves, of sending a part of the bridal cake to absent relatives and friends.

Plutarch mentions an instance of this kind in which Antigonus, king of Corinth, sent a part of the feast of sacrifice to Aratus; and Aristophanes alludes to the custom at wedding feasts:—"Some bridegroom has sent you a part of the wedding feast." The Jews followed the same practice, as we learn from the Sacred Writings:—"Now the day came, and Elcana offered sacrifice, and gave to Phenenna, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters portions." (1 Kings i. 4.) And again, "And he said to them: Go, eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord, and be not sad; for the joy of the Lord is our strength." (2 Esdras viii. 10.) After the substantial part of the feast was disposed of, the dessert followed, which consisted of fruit of all sorts, and different kinds of cakes; this portion of the feast was called *μεταδόρτια*. Then ensued music and dancing, which Homer calls *ἀναδιδυμὰ δαίτης*, the crowning of the feast; and these were interspersed with gay songs and stories. Their songs were generally in praise of heroes, as were those of

the Romans. The song of Harmodius was an especial favourite with them, and was generally sung first at the feasts. They also had songs in praise of virtue, and in condemnation of cowardice. Timocreon, the Rhodian poet, composed one against riches, beginning with Ὁ τυφλὲ Πλούτε, "O blind Pluto!" They had other songs called σκόλια, which were sung in snatches or rhapsodies by several members of the company; the first singer taking a myrtle rod, and commencing a passage in any of the poets, as in Æschylus, or Euripides, or Simonides, and continuing as long as he pleased. After he had concluded he handed the myrtle rod to any person he chose in the company, who was to resume from the place where the first had left off; and so on until several had taken a part, and the performance was concluded. He whom the company pronounced victorious in the contest received the ὄδειον, or reward of song, which was a cup, or some such thing. Where the song was taken from Homer, the singer held not a myrtle, but a laurel bough in his hand; and the reward of victory was a lamb. In this case the song was called ἄνοδος, not σκολιον. The harp was an instrument much in requisition among the Greeks; and at their feasts it was handed round from one to another, each holding a bough of myrtle or laurel in his hand while he played upon it. They sometimes even enacted comedies at their feasts, when those of Menander were selected. But while thus indulging in the gratification of the senses, and promoting by every means within their power the joyous flow of their spirits, they occasionally reverted, by artificial representation, to the uncertain

and fleeting condition of life and all worldly enjoyments. To this end they were wont to play at a sort of toy so constructed that whenever it was shaken or thrown on the table it presented a new face or appearance.

These machines were called *στόματα*, or faces. These changing appearances were intended to recall to their minds the mutability of all human things, and the consequent necessity of looking forward to, and preparing for, another world. The Egyptians had a custom of a similar nature at their feasts, which was intended, as it frequently happened with respect to that of the Greeks, to stimulate the banqueters to increased sensual indulgence; from the reasoning that as life is a transitory existence, it becomes the duty of all, as it is founded in true wisdom, to enjoy the passing hours without reserve. The custom of the Egyptians, in this respect, was to bring in the image of a dead man reclining in a coffin, while an attendant cried aloud, "Eat and drink, for to-morrow ye shall die."

CHAPTER LIX.

Grecian hospitality—Ceremonies observed upon the arrival and the departure of strangers.

AS we have observed before, the virtue of hospitality was especially cherished among the Greeks. In fact, scarcely was any crime looked upon by them with a greater degree of abhorrence and detestation than that of treating strangers with unkindness and incivility. He who did wrong to a stranger was esteemed a wicked and an ungodly person. The father of the gods himself they called *Zeûs ξένιος*, that is, Jupiter the Patron of strangers. There were many tales current amongst them tending to show the will of Jupiter in this respect. Among the rest was one in reference to some of the inhabitants of Cyprus having been turned into bullocks because they had been guilty of inhospitable treatment to strangers; and that of Baucis and Philemon, the Phrygians, who had hospitably received Jupiter, while the rest of the inhabitants had refused him entertainment; the god thereupon causing an earthquake to hurl down the houses of the other inhabitants, while he saved that of his entertainers, and converted it into a temple. But there were express laws in Athens which prohibited inhospitable treatment to strangers. Aris-

tippus, through the information communicated to him by Socrates on this point of hospitality, removed to Athens, and settled there. Lest any wrong should be done to strangers without the knowledge of the authorities, there were public officers, called *προστάται*, especially appointed to attend to the duty of enforcing their kind and hospitable reception ; and others called *πρόξενοι*, whose duty it was to receive and entertain them. In the houses of the better and more comfortable classes were kept a table and a chamber for the especial use of strangers. The people of Sparta, or Lacedæmon, however, are represented as not being of the same hospitable character as the Athenians ; and as having only certain days on which they admitted strangers at all ; and whom they treated with deception ; yet Plato speaks in the highest terms of praise of their social regulations. This circumstance, as a writer upon the subject observes, would induce one to believe that the treatment here spoken of was not directed against strangers as such, but against barbarians and foes.

To guests who were friends, or who had letters or symbols of introduction from friends, the Greeks were in a peculiar degree attentive, so much so indeed that they could never entertain the least unfavourable suspicion of them. We have a remarkable instance of this in Plutarch, where Dio is reported to have been murdered by his guest Callippus, in consequence of his unwillingness to believe that he could receive injury from a person whom he was entertaining with kindness and civility in his house, though he had been forewarned of the intended treachery of his guest ;

"being," says Plutarch, "ashamed to try to escape from a person who was not only his friend, but even a guest." When a stranger arrived as a guest at the house of an Athenian citizen, there were certain formalities used in the reception of him. First the host received him at the door; and both standing upon the threshold, they mutually pledged their faith to each other,—*confirmabant quod unus non deciperet alium*. They then entered the house, where the stranger was invited to drink a cup of wine, *the stranger's cup*, as it was called; and all this took place even before the name of the stranger was asked; "as though," says Athenæus, "honour was to be paid to him as being a stranger, and not because he was of any particular condition." Salt was next produced and offered to him; as if to signify that their friendship was to be kept pure and sweet. As a mark of respect the daughters of the house were to attend upon him during his stay, and even to bring water and wash his feet with their own hands. He was assigned apartments in a detached part of the house for his own use, and also a separate table at meals. He was also provided with a place at the public exhibitions. It was also a custom among the ancients, that a stranger when arriving in a place should pay due devotion to its presiding genius, and even offer sacrifice with that intention. The moment he put his foot upon the soil, he stooped down, and kissed it; as Ovid represents Cadmus to have done upon his landing in Greece: "Cadmus returned thanks, and kissed the strange ground, and saluted the unknown mountains and fields." He also attended to the religious

ceremonies of the place, and to the established worship of the gods, as long as he remained ; and upon his departure, as soon as he came to the extremity of the land, and was at the point of leaving it, he took his leave of the genius of the country, by stooping down and kissing the soil, as he had done upon his first entrance. Presents, or pledges of friendship, were also given him by his entertainer at his departure ; and sometimes, if necessary, he was supplied with money to defray his travelling expenses. There was also in Athens a public house of entertainment, where strangers who had no introduction to private families, or who were otherwise refused private hospitality, might have recourse. Murderers were the only persons that were refused all hospitality.

CHAPTER LX.

Beggary not permitted among the Greeks—Modes of providing for the necessities of the poor.

IT is a remarkable fact that beggary was wholly unknown in Athens; and indeed this might be said with respect to Greece in general. It was not that poverty had no existence among them, for we read that provision was made to meet the necessities of the poor; but this was effected in such a manner as to prevent the sense of degradation, and consequent debasement of spirit which actual alms-seeking and whining beggary are sure to beget. In fact, the Athenians felt on this point a jealousy of the honour of the city, and looked upon the practice of begging as not only debasing in itself, but also as calculated to reflect disgrace on the national honour. To provide, therefore, for the wants of the poor, there was a common treasury kept in each division or ward of the city; and from this the necessities of the poor were relieved, as well as ransom provided for captives. Into this treasury each person poured his contribution once every month. But, besides this common fund, the poor had other sources of relief; for it was customary with the wealthier classes to give a public feast at every new moon for the benefit of the poor.

This feast was composed of coarse fare, but was such as afforded comfortable nourishment to such as were really in want of food. In fact, it was such as gave occasion to some of the Greek writers to say that the condition of the poor was better than that of the rich. But independently of the care thus evinced for the poor to supply their animal wants, there was a provision made for their moral and intellectual improvement, according to which they were supplied with seats or places at the theatres and public exhibitions.

CHAPTER LXI.

Military organization of the Athenians—Infantry and cavalry—
Order of preferment—The Athenian soldiery not paid for
their services—Armour, arms, and clothing of the soldiers.

THE military organization of the Athenians was of a very simple, but, at the same time, very effective description. Every young man, except such as were excluded on account of their condition of servitude, was enrolled in a sort of city militia at the age of eighteen years. He was then said to be *ἐν τοῖς περιπόλοις*, that is, a member of the city guard. The duties which devolved upon him in this capacity were simply to keep watch and ward over the city; that is, some were appointed as sentinels in various parts of the city, and others were stationed in the forts for the purpose of defence. They were also employed in the construction of works connected with the fortifications within the city. After having spent the period of one year in this employment, they were drafted to places without the city, where they performed the duties of external guards. This was called the first degree of preferment; and as a symbol of it, they were invested with a spear, a shield, and a cloak. In this capacity they remained for one year more; at the expiration of which they became

qualified for general service. For it is necessary to observe that during these two first years of military discipline they could not be compelled to fight beyond the precincts or liberties of the city; but afterward they were liable to be sent on foreign service. At the expiration of this term of two years they had their names enrolled in a sort of regimental register, where in addition to their proper names they received another indicative of the position which they had thus attained; and their date of service commenced from this period. Besides those who were excluded, as I have said, from all military service, such as persons bound in servitude who were never called out except on occasions of great emergency, and even then with a great degree of caution, there were some who were exempt by virtue of their employments, such as collectors of tribute or duty, and the priests of the god Bacchus. The general of the army was called *πολέμαρχος*; and he it was who upon occasions of emergency enrolled the bondsmen or slaves. They were then enlisted by the officer next in command, whether of the horse or foot, according to the department for which the levy was required. The foot soldiers were divided into three sections, distinguished by the arms offensive and defensive which they carried, as well as by their armour. The heavy-armed infantry, or *βαρυνάτη ὄπλις*, as they were called, wore heavy armour, and long spears, with broad shields. The light-armed, or *ψιλοί*, wore no armour, or, at least, but very little, and were armed with darts, arrows, and slings, the stones for which they carried upon them. The third section

were called *πελτασταί*, and were distinguished from the others by their light armour, and the short spears and narrow shields which they carried. The cavalry were a very able and powerful corps. No one was admitted into it except such as were of independent fortune, and of a sound and healthy constitution. Before being enrolled they were subjected to an examination by the Senate of Five Hundred ; as were also their horses, lest they should be unfit to bear the clatter and noise of warlike engagements. In order to try the fitness of the horses in this respect they made a great noise with an instrument which they called the *κῶδων*, which was a sort of trumpet. The cavalry was divided into two classes or divisions ; the one called *διμάχαιραι*, and the other *ἵππαγωγοί*. The former were so called because they fought both on horseback and afoot, having a boy with them for the purpose of holding the horse when they alighted to engage on foot—it is said that Alexander, the Macedonian conqueror, was the first who invented this style of fighting ;—the latter, that is the *ἵππαγωγοί*, had their designation from the circumstance of having two horses, one of which they led, while they fought on the other.

The style of display observed by the cavalry was extremely gorgeous and pompous ; they frequently entered the city in the manner of a triumph, drawn in carriages, and arrayed in purple or scarlet robes. The strength of the cavalry was regulated by the census ; that is, it bore a certain proportion to the number of inhabitants ; but the ordinary proportion was twenty-four to every tribe, which, counting twelve

tribes as the highest number into which the people had been ever divided, would give a force of two hundred and eighty-eight men. It has been observed that this arm of the military service was composed of men of independent fortune; the same observation, to a certain extent, may be applied to the foot soldiers, inasmuch as they defrayed all their own expenses when they went to war. They deemed it a matter of disgrace to take pay for their services in the defence and protection of their country and its liberties; and those who did so were called *mercenaries*, and held in no esteem. The armour worn by the Greek soldiers consisted of a helmet and a coat of mail, with a shield fastened on the left arm. The metal first used in the construction of armour was brass; and it is said that the inhabitants of the island of Lemnos were the first who made it—Vulcan being considered their first, or at least their greatest, worker in this department. "They worked in brass," says Hesiod, "for they had not yet discovered the better metal, iron." The most conspicuous part of the helmet was the crest, which was composed either of the hair of a horse's tail, or of feathers; and was either double or treble, according to the rank and quality of the person. It was called *λόφος*, and is said to have been invented by the Carians; and thence called *Καρικὸς λόφος*, or Carian crest. The treble crest was worn by those who by their exploits had won the distinction of a hero. This was even sometimes fourfold. The projecting part of the helmet, or penthouse, was denominated *τὸ γείσσον*. Of the coats of mail there were three different kinds;

one, which was called *σῶμα*, extended only from the navel to the knees; another only covered half the breast, and was thence called *ἡμιθώρακιον*,—this was the kind which the soldiers of Alexander of Macedon are reported to have worn; the third was called *θώραξ*, and extended from the shoulder to the navel, thereby covering *τὸ θεῖον*, the divine part, or heart, and deriving its name from this circumstance.

The *θώραξ* was made of leather: and consisted either of one piece, or of different pieces connected with chains, or plates of iron.

The coat of mail worn by the Romans was made of the same material. Of shields there were several kinds, both as to the substance of which they were composed, and the shape or form which they bore. They were sometimes made of osier twigs interlaced or woven into each other, and thence called *ἱτέαι*, and sometimes of solid wood. But the general construction was of ox-hide or leather, which was doubled or trebled, and sometimes made even tenfold. The shield of Ajax is reported to have been composed of seven pieces of leather laid one over the other, and thence called by Ovid *septemplex clypeus*, the sevenfold shield; and that of Achilles of ten. This latter was covered with a sheet of brass, as was the case in other instances; wherefore Euripides calls it *χαλκονώτος ἀσπίς*, the brazen shield. The form of the shield was either round or square, or sometimes oblong. They expended a great deal of labour and ingenuity in its construction; it was covered with a variety of figures and ornaments, and had a perforated rim through which they might see the enemy. It had a handle by

which it was held; and there was an embossment in the centre, the better to repel the weapons which reached it. The Carians are supposed to have been the inventors of this, as well as of the crest of the helmet; and it was a custom among them to bury a shield and crest with every corpse, in commemoration of the invention. The figures or arms painted on the shield were of different kinds, according to the rank and quality of the bearer; that of Ulysses, for instance, was a dolphin; and of Idomeneus a cock. But an eagle was the common figure represented on the shields of the ancient heroes. Besides these there were verses written beneath them, descriptive of the achievements, and in praise of the valour and prowess of the bearer. Such, we find from Pausanias, were on the shield of Idomeneus. The case or covering in which the shield was enclosed was called *σάγμα*. There were certain superstitious notions connected with the shield in the minds of the ancients. If it happened to strike them on the knee, the omen was regarded as favourable; but the contrary if they chanced to strike it with their spear. We are informed that the great shield of Jupiter Ægiochus, or the Ægis, as it was called, was covered with the skin of the goat Amalthæa, which had nursed him. He is said to have presented it to Minerva, who engraved upon it the head of Medusa, which used to turn the beholder into stone. In times of peace it was the custom to hang up the shields, as well as all other warlike arms, in the temple; and as regards the shield, it was deprived of its handle when thus hung up; so that in the event of an insurrection of

the people it could not be used. The usual colour of the clothes and arms of the ancient Greeks was a deep red ; the reason for which is supposed to have been that they might not, in the event of being wounded, be able to distinguish their blood, and thereby become disheartened ; and also that the enemy might not be able to discover whether they were wounded or not.

CHAPTER LXII.

Weapons of attack—Preparations for war—Order of march—
Signals of engagements—Treatment of prisoners—Burial
of soldiers fallen in battle.

EVERY man when marching to war was furnished with an ozier basket with a long neck, called *γυλίον*, for the purpose of carrying their provisions in it. The ordinary provisions were olives, cheese, and onions, of which they usually carried a three days' allowance. In early times the usual weapon of attack was the club, called by Homer *φάλαγξ*; but in after-time the spear became the favourite weapon. It is even reported that they paid divine honour to this weapon, and hung it in the temple among the statues of the gods. At all events it is certain that they held it in the highest esteem. Eustathius describes it as an iron with a sharp point, resembling a snake, and thence called *σαῦρος*; and having a hollow head into which the spear, properly so called, was inserted. When not in use it was enclosed in a wooden case, and put up by a pillar of the house, according to the testimonies of Homer and Virgil. The former thus alludes to it: "He placed the spear which he carried against the high pillar." Homer uses the word *ἐγγεψαλλός*, spear-brandisher, to signify a soldier,

because it was a custom with the Greek soldiers to shake or brandish the spear before using it. They also used the bow and arrow at a later period ; and made the string of the former of horse-hair. The sword, too, was one of their offensive weapons ; and this they hung at their sides by a leathern belt. This belt, too, we are informed, passed over the shoulder, and was connected with the thong or string by which the shield was held suspended from the side. The Greeks were not accustomed to rush hastily into war ; on the contrary, they regarded the necessity of warlike proceeding, rather as an evil to be avoided by all rational and honourable means. In consequence of this feeling the science of diplomacy was cultivated among them ; and in the reception which they gave to ambassadors they observed the utmost regard to gravity of conduct and propriety of speech.

They received ambassadors in a temple, and there gave them audience ; and the entertainments given in honour of them were held in the Prytaneum, or temple of justice. The ensign, or emblem of authority borne by Greek ambassadors, was a wand encircled with snakes, called *κηρύκειον*. An ambassador's pay was two drachmai a day, that is, about a shilling of our money. If warlike negotiations did not terminate satisfactorily, it was usual to announce the commencement of hostilities by proclamation. Nothing was done secretly or in the dark, for they abhorred taking any undue advantage of an enemy. Everything was done openly, and in a fair, straightforward manner. The manner of making proclamation of war was by despatching a messenger to the boundary-line of the

enemy's country, for the purpose of hurling a spear over it, or letting loose a lamb into the borders. This act of hostility took place after all necessary preparations had been made for the campaign, and immediately preceding the opening of actual hostilities. Before they commenced to march, however, they made various preparations with the view of ensuring success. They offered sacrifices to the gods, and consulted the old oracles and prophecies relating to the fortune and destinies of the city ; applied to the soothsayers and prophets ; and made their vows of offering to some particular god in the event of a successful issue. They were careful, too, to select a favourable time for the march, for they were impressed with superstitious notions as to lucky and unlucky days for the commencement of a warlike expedition. The seventh day of the month was that which the Athenians regarded as the most propitious for this purpose, although the Lacedemonians believed that it would not be lucky to march before the time of full moon.

The day of new moon was that appointed for the election of commanders. In the order of march it was the custom for the general to keep on the right wing ; and raw recruits were disposed in the least dangerous positions, for the purpose of preventing disorder arising in consequence of their inexperience in the field. Whenever a river was to be crossed in the line of march, a sacrifice was first offered on the bank before the troops were allowed to pass over. Before they joined battle they were wont to slay a victim for sacrifice ; and having examined the gall for an omen, they lighted torches made of dry wood, and

sent them by the torch-bearers, who flung them down between the opposing armies. This was intended as the signal for battle. Those torch-bearers were held inviolable in their persons, for they were supposed to be under the particular protection of Mars, the god of war. This form of signal was also made upon the approach of an enemy ; if he made his appearance by day, a smoke was raised from the towers or strongholds ; but if by night, the torches were lighted. This was also the signal used on the approach of friends ; with this distinction, however, that in the case of an enemy the torches were brandished and tossed about, while in that of friends they were kept lighting steadily. In the process of time, however, the torches gave way to trumpets, of which the Tyrrhenians are said to have been the inventors. When two contending armies met, and were about to join battle, a long blast from the trumpet announced the circumstance. There is also reason to believe that at one period of Grecian history the signal of battle was made by the clashing of shields. Among the various modes of conveying intelligence of the favourable or unfavourable results of a battle, there was one of a rather curious description. It was this : two sticks were prepared of equal size and length ; one of these the general of the army brought along with him, and the other was left with friends at home. Whenever a message was to be sent from one side or the other, a piece of parchment was rolled round one of these sticks, and the message written upon it, and thus it was conveyed to its destination. If it happened to be intercepted no information could be obtained by it, inasmuch as the writing

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would convey no meaning unless wrapped round the corresponding stick. The Lacedemonians are said to have been the first who fell upon this mode of communication, and from them it was said to have been imitated by the Athenians. In the meantime the people at home were wont to assemble on the highways and offer sacrifices for the success of their friends; and if they received any news while thus engaged, they immediately made it known to all, if favourable; but if otherwise, it was kept back.

The messenger of good news was, upon his delivery of it, crowned with garlands, and received with a species of triumph. If any person fled from the battle, or betrayed the post assigned him, he was put to death. But he who was exempt from bearing arms, and therefore refused to fight, or who from cowardice was unable to fight, or who left his rank and threw down his arms, was handed over to the proper officers, called *Heliastæ*, who were empowered to inflict such punishment upon him as they might think proper. And such persons were not permitted to go into the temples until justice was satisfied. Prisoners of war were never allowed to be put to death. Those who happened to be wounded in battle were allowed a pension of two *oboli* a day, an obolus being equal to about three halfpence; but before they received this pension they were to undergo an examination before the Council of Five Hundred, in order to have it shown that they were what was called *ἀδύνατοι*, that is, that they were not in possession of an estate equal in value to three *minæ*, which was something less than eight pounds.

The children of such as were killed in battle received a maintenance out of the public treasury, until they arrived at the age of twenty-one years, when they were furnished with a *πανοπλία*, or suit of armour, to put them in mind that they were to emulate the valour and patriotism of their fathers, and to defend their country against its enemies. They were also honoured with the front seats at public exhibitions. Those who were slain in the battle-field and buried there, as happened at Marathon, were laid upon their shields, as the most appropriate coffins, and thus interred. The burial ceremony on such occasions was this: the surviving companions of the deceased marched in full equipage three times around the funeral pyre, brandishing their arms, and throwing their swords, or belts, or one or other of their accoutrements, into the fire with him. But when they were buried at home, the treasury supplied all the attendant expenses of a public funeral; and all the bodies were deposited at the same time in the Ceramicus, or public burial-ground. For three days before burial, the bones of the deceased were laid up in tents; and on the burial day each tribe brought a coffin made of cypress wood, and depositing therein the remains of their deceased friends, they placed it in the grave, and erected a pillar, with an inscription, near it. A funeral oration was then pronounced over the whole. Those who had distinguished themselves in the battle, and survived it, were permitted to have their coat of arms painted upon their shields, and were honoured by the title of *Cecropidæ*, or citizens of the true old blood. In order to retain the memory of

victories, it was usual with the Greeks to erect pillars of brass, or stone, or wood, which were called triumphal pillars. Similar memorials were erected by the Romans, and called triumphal arches. Upon the triumphal pillar was engraved an inscription expressive of the cause of the war, and the manner in which the victory was won. This inscription was called *ἐπίγραμμα*. In after-time, however, the custom of erecting trophies was abandoned ; and instead thereof they either built altars, such as we are told Alexander did upon the hill Amanas, or erected statues to Jupiter tropaios, in acknowledgment to the god for causing the enemy to turn their backs. Similar statues were erected by the Romans to Jupiter stator, for causing their soldiers to maintain their ground, and not give way to the enemy. The spoils taken from the enemy, which were called *σκύλα* when taken from the dead, and *λάφυρα* from the living, were dedicated to the gods, and sometimes sent to the temple at Delphos. But the arms which they took from the enemy they either hung up in the temples or in their houses, with the arms which they had themselves used.

CHAPTER LXIII.

The spirit and practice of prophecy among the ancients—The several kinds of prophecy—The Greek philosophers' belief in divination—The Oracle of Delphos; its origin, and mode of operation.

THE spirit of divination or prophecy prevailed to a very extraordinary extent among the ancients. There were persons especially set apart among the Israelites and heathen nations for this sublime vocation. As the former had their prophets, so had the latter their seers and men cunning in the ways of providence. The Persians gloried in their *Magi*, the Assyrians in their *Chaldæi*, the Indians in their *Gumnosophoi*, the Sicilians in their *Galliotæ*, and the Romans in their *Hetrusci* and *Aruspices*. Those people were held in high honour, and deemed worthy of the position and honours of royalty. In point of fact, it was necessary to a Persian king to be skilled in the prophetic art; and we find that some of the Grecian kings were soothsayers also. Amphilochus and Mopsus, who were kings of Argos, had no small celebrity for their skill in augury. The celebrated prophet and prophetess, Helenus and Cassandra, were the children of a king. This kind of cunning was deemed of essential importance in a physician; and we therefore find that Æschylus uses the words *iarpós*, a physician, and *μάρ-*

τις, a prophet, indiscriminately, to signify a man skilled in the medical art. The ancient authors make mention of several persons who were equally distinguished in both departments of knowledge. The philosophers gave credit to the science of divination. The Platonic or Socratic sect of philosophers had full belief in its truth and efficacy ; and so had the Peripatetics, at the head of whom was Aristotle. Zeno and his followers, the Stoics, were faithful adherents to its mysterious revealings ; as were also Pythagoras and his sect, with this exception, that they withheld credit from that branch of the art called *extispicina*, or divination by the entrails of animals. In short, of all the philosophic sects, the only one that set their face entirely against it were the Epicureans, or followers of Epicurus. The divination of the ancients was distinguished into two parts ; one was that delivered by the gods through the oracle ; the other, that pronounced through the lips of men. The former had the name of *χρησμός*, the latter of *μαντεία*. The divination by men, or *μαντεία*, was divided into two kinds, namely, the *artificial* and the *natural*. What was meant by the artificial was that description of prophetic skill which arises from experience and observation, whereas the natural was that which comes of itself, as it were by divine inspiration.

This latter was more properly called the prophetic faculty, or *μαντική* ; and exhibited itself by a sort of frenzied movement of the mind. This prophetic fury is represented by the prophet Isaiah as a punishment inflicted by God upon those who dared to invade His divine province by assuming to themselves the power of prophecy : " Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and

thy maker from the womb : I am the Lord that make all things, that alone stretch out the heavens, that establish the earth, and there is none with Me. That make void the tokens of diviners, and make the soothsayers mad. That turn the wise backward, and that make their knowledge foolish." (Isa. xlv. 25.) The prophecies of dying men, and the prophetic visions given by dreams, belong to that department of the art distinguished by the *motu furenti*, or frenzied movement of the mind. Cicero informs us of one Rhodius, who on his death-bed had foretold the death of six young men of the same age in the order in which it occurred. The most celebrated oracles of Greece were those of Pythius Apollo, Demonæus, and Jupiter Ammon. The Pythian oracle was by far the most distinguished, and is said to have been so called from *πίθων*, a serpent, because a serpent was killed by Apollo in the place where the oracle was afterward established ; or, as some say, from Pythis, the son of Delphus, and grandson of Apollo. The place of this oracle was called Delphos, and is represented as being in the middle of Greece ; wherefore it was called *ὀμφαλός*, or the navel. It was even thought that this place formed the middle point of the world ; and the belief existed, as to the mode in which this knowledge was ascertained, that Jupiter having let fly two eagles, or two swans, from the opposite extremities of the world, they met at this point. Tellus is represented by some as having been the first who established this oracle, and Themis by others.

The story of its first establishment, as told by Diodorus, is very curious. The ground about where

it stood was originally a common, which was browsed generally by goats. One day some of these animals happening to come near a cave which had a small opening on the top, they looked in, and immediately commenced leaping and uttering strange sounds. The herd, whose name was Coretas, upon seeing the goats thus agitated, ran to the spot; but he had no sooner stood at the mouth or opening of the cave than he became influenced in the same manner as the goats, and began to utter prophecies. When this report got abroad, several persons, moved by curiosity, went to see the place where such strange events occurred, and were upon their arrival there affected even as the goat-herd. Some even fell dead as soon as they breathed the air from the cavern. After this a *tripod* or three-legged stool was placed upon the opening, and a young woman was consecrated as a priestess, and called *Pythia*, whose office it was to stand upon this stool, whenever application was made by any person in reference to futurity, and to announce the answer of the oracle, having first arranged it in verse.

Isaiah alludes to the mutterings of the pythoness on such occasions when he says, "And when they shall say to you: Seek of pythons, and of diviners, who mutter in their enchantments: should not the people seek of their God for the living of the dead." (Isa. viii. 19.) And again: "Thou shalt be brought down, thou shalt speak out of the earth, and thy speech shall be heard out of the ground: and thy voice shall be from the earth, like that of the python, and out of the ground thy speech shall mutter." (Isa.

xxix. 4.) The manner in which the pythoness went through the ceremony of divination was this : she sat upon the tripod for a brief space of time, during which she was supposed to become filled with inspiration ; she then exhibited frantic gestures, tore her hair, scratched her flesh, and ran about, muttering and foaming at the mouth. The name of the first young woman who was consecrated to this office was *Phenomene*, as we are told ; but the common name given to them all was *Pythia*. In the beginning they were all young virgins ; but after a time women who had arrived at the age of fifty years were preferred for the office. Before they sat upon the tripod or stool, they bathed their bodies, and more especially their hair, in the Castilian fountain ; and then, upon taking their seat, they shook the laurel-tree which grew near the cave, and sometimes plucked some of the leaves and began chewing them.

CHAPTER LXIV.

The answers of the Oracle at first delivered in verse—Great importance attached to the Oracle—Its corruption in course of time—Opinion of Cicero and Demosthenes—The great wealth of the Oracle—The other chief Oracles of Antiquity.

IT is said that the first person who came to consult the oracle was one Parnassus ; whence the mountain and neighbourhood around it derived their name. The tripod, as has been said, was a three-legged stool, or rather, a round table supported by three legs. From this the Pythia, or prophetess, delivered the response of the god, which was usually so arranged as to admit of a great deal of ambiguity. This was doubtless unavoidable, as it was necessary that the delusion should be maintained by allowing a safety-valve for the escape of stubborn facts. The form of verse was therefore employed, as more convenient for the purposes of mystery. The measure of the verse was generally hexameter or heroic. Plutarch says that it was believed in his day, that there were poets kept purposely in the neighbourhood of the oracle, in order to wrap up the responses in the garb of verse.

In later times, however, verse was abandoned, and prose became the vehicle of divination. Nothing could exceed the importance which the Greeks

attached to the oracular prophecies. They placed far more reliance upon them than upon any other form of divination, because they knew that men, from one motive or another, were liable to disguise the truth, and feign what was false, when they acted as the exponents of future events through the inspection of the entrails of animals, the flight of birds, or other modes of divination. It therefore happened that, when no other prophetic announcement would prevail, the oracle was resorted to, as that which was least fallible. When soldiers were to be acted upon on the approach of battle, and the strongest inducement was to be devised to urge them on, the oracle was applied to. Nothing was deemed decisive but this; and its pronouncements were not to be questioned. And yet deception was as likely to be practised in this as in any other form of divination; for it was only necessary to bribe the woman who held the office of Pythoness, in order to obtain from the oracle whatever response was considered desirable. And this, according to the evidence of the ancient writers, was frequently done. Cicero's opinion, to be sure, would seem to have been very exalted with respect to the infallible character of the Delphic oracle, for he says: "That oracle at Delphos could never have been so renowned and illustrious, nor enriched with so many gifts from kings and people of all countries, if every age had not proved the truth of those divinations." That is certainly a strong manifestation of what Cicero thought and believed on this subject. He says, however, as a sort of qualification of this opinion, that "such did not long continue to be the case,"

thereby insinuating that corruption had crept in, and the truth became perverted. Demosthenes insinuated the same charge long before the time of Cicero, and pointed to the gold of Philip of Macedon as the source whence flowed the influence which perverted the integrity of the oracle. But even before the age of Demosthenes charges of corruption were made against the oracle ; for instance, Clisthenes is said to have bribed the Pythoness on one occasion ; that is, with the view of influencing the people of Lacedemon to assist the Athenians to get rid of the Tyranny. But without going farther into such instances of corruption, the astonishment is that such universal credence should have been given to this scheme of prophecy for so long a period. Men's minds would seem to have been completely moulded to a belief in its infallible efficacy. It was a fixed, unwavering belief ; a centre of faith around which the thoughts, the hopes, the actions of men revolved, and to which they were kept in adhesion by the general apparent agreement between the prophecy and the event. It was indeed, to say the least, a most extraordinary scheme of delusion ; extraordinary, not alone for the universal faith which its predictions had acquired, but also for the lengthened period over which it maintained its hold on the popular credulity ; and this, too, in spite of the duplicity which accompanied its announcements, and the fallacy in which they so often resulted.

The wealth which was accumulated in the temple erected for the purposes of this oracle at Delphos was immense almost beyond belief. But some idea may

be formed of it by the reflection that nearly all the kings and people of the then known world contributed to its treasury. The words *Aphetoriæ opes*, by which its treasures were called, became a common expression to indicate boundless wealth. As we use the expression *el dorado* to-day, to signify a mine of wealth, so, in those times, *Aphetoriæ opes* was employed to express the same idea. There were four or five different temples erected at this place at various times, that is, in succession. The first is said to have been constructed of laurel boughs procured in the plain of Tempe. The next was built by one Pteras, probably of similar material, though the ancient writers say of wax and feathers; a figurative expression, no doubt, taken from the similarity between the name of the builder and *πτερόν*, a feather or wing. The third was constructed of brass; this is said to have been destroyed by an earthquake. The fourth was of stone, and was destroyed by fire in the beginning of the fifth Olympiad, that is, shortly before the foundation of Rome, or between seven and eight centuries anterior to the Christian era. The next was built by the Amphictionic Council with the treasures of the temple; this was erected in a steep place, and had but one narrow entrance, over which were engraved the celebrated letters E. I. Whenever the Athenians required the aid of Apollo, either in difficult undertakings, or when afflicted or threatened with disease or sickness, they resorted to the temple with their offerings, and received from the oracle the necessary instructions for their guidance. There were also extraordinary embassies sometimes sent to conciliate the favour of the god, when certain ceremonies were employed,

such as those observed on occasion of the annual visit to the island of Delos. The particular period of time at which the Delphic oracle was suppressed is not known. It is said by some that Alexander the Great was the person who put an end to it ; which, however, cannot be true, inasmuch as it was in vogue after his time. The opinion of Plutarch is, that it ceased when people became wise enough to understand the absurdity of it, and to learn that it was a mere fraudulent institution, devised for the purpose of extracting money from them. However, after the institution had fallen into contempt and disuse at Delphos, it was established among the Scythians of the North ; and one Abaris, a Scythian, is reported to have written a book giving an account of its introduction, and containing the oracles which had been delivered there. It is said that the Athenians had recourse to it even still ; and that on one occasion, whilst a plague was raging throughout Greece, they received advice from the oracle in Scythia to offer vows and prayers for the cessation of the evil.

The oracle of Jupiter Hammon was situated in that part of Africa inhabited by the Garamantes—a region of almost intolerable heat. This is thought to have been at first but a school established for the education of the children and descendants of Ham, and to have been afterward converted, by the power and influence of his sable majesty, into an institution for the delivery of oracles.

The Dodonian Oracle was established in Epirus in Thessaly, and is supposed to have been the first of the kind ever known. It is known by the name of the Dodonian Oracle, from the circumstance of the city of

Dodona having been built near the place where the temple stood. The story of its establishment is a curious one, and is simply this : that two doves flew across the Mediterranean Sea from Egypt, and one of them, having pitched upon a beech-tree in Epirus, began to utter human sounds and to give instruction to the people : and, among other things, she advised them to build a temple on the spot. Deucalion followed this advice, when he had arrived there in his ship after the subsidence of the great deluge ; and also built the city of Dodona. It is necessary to observe here that the ancient Greeks had a tradition that the earth was submerged by a great flood, which occurred in the reign of Deucalion, king of Thessaly. Whether this tradition had any reference to the deluge in Noah's time, or whether it was an event entirely distinct in the minds of the ancient Greeks, it is difficult to ascertain. Certain it is, however, that it makes a great figure in the fabulous history of the ancients. The construction which most writers on Grecian antiquities put upon this story of the doves is, that they were women who had been trained in the delusions of prophecy in that most fertile region of mystery and superstition, ancient Egypt ; and that they were carried by the Phœnicians, who were in those times the greatest cultivators of commerce, into their own country, and afterwards into Thessaly. It would seem that, in the language of the people of Thessaly, the word *πελεια* or *πελειᾱς*, which signifies a dove, was also used to signify a prophetess, and an old woman. The invention, therefore, of the story of the doves is easily accounted for from this circum-

CHAPTER LXV.

The interpretation of dreams—How dreams were regarded by the Greeks.

THE art of interpreting dreams was made much of among the ancient Greeks. They wrote a great number of books on the subject, and were evidently impressed with the idea that dreams were emanations of the gods directing mortals in the conduct of sublunary matters.

Plutarch says that there was a Treatise on Dreams found among the books of Mithridates; and we are told that Artemon Milesius wrote twenty-two books on the same subject. There is preserved in the Greek a copy of eighty verses on the signification of certain signs or objects in dreams. But the dreams on which they chiefly relied, as being of a prophetic character, were such as occurred in the morning. There are various conjectures as to who was the first person who regarded dreams in a prophetic light, and became an interpreter of them. Some, on the authority of Pliny, think that it was Amphyctyon, the son of Deucalion; some again, that it was Philo-Judæus. Some ascribe the origin of the art to Abraham; and some again to Joseph. Pausanias speaks of Amphiaraus as the first who turned

his attention to this subject, and says that he was deified for his skill in the art. The people of Hybla in Sicily were much celebrated on this account ; as were also those who lived near the Gades, or Straits of Gibraltar. And in all countries where the art was practised old doating women were the greatest proficients, and received the largest amount of attention.

It was not an unusual thing with them, when they looked for a dream prophetic of the future, to sacrifice a ram to Amphiaraus, and sleep upon the fleece. *Ovium sub nocte silenti*, says Virgil, alluding to the practice, *pellibus incubuit stratis, somnosque petivit*. In purifications, too, a similar practice was observed ; for instance, in the Eleusinian sacrifices, they took the skins of the beasts that had been sacrificed to Jupiter, and placed them under their feet. The use of skins and fleeces, in short, was very general amongst the ancients for the purposes of superstitious ceremony, as well as of symbolic representation. In mourning they were indispensable ; as also in marriages, when the bride used a fleece as a cushion, to show her disposition to be industrious in the domestic arts of carding and spinning. The Scythians followed a very curious custom in this respect, for when any among them suffered injury or wrong, he would take an ox and sacrifice it ; and having cut up the flesh and boiled it, he would place himself upon the hide with his hands behind his back. His friends would then assemble ; and every one of them would take a piece of the flesh, and planting his foot upon the skin, would promise him assistance, either in men

or arms, to avenge his cause, and redress his injury. This was looked upon in the light of a solemn and binding engagement, which was not to be violated. But on the subject of dreams, it was a common custom with the Athenians to sleep in the temples, with laurel wreaths around their heads, after having sacrificed to Brizo, the goddess of dreamers.

And the Spartans had men purposely employed to sleep in the temple of Pasithia in order to obtain dreams. In cases of sickness it was usual with them to sleep in the temple of Æsculapius, the god of medicine, in order to dream of a cure; a proceeding which was also followed in Egypt, in the temple of Serapis. But in order to give due effect to all this business, there were certain preparations made, and ceremonies observed; as, for instance, to abstain from food for a day, and from wine for three days preceding the night when the dream was to be sought. It was considered bad to eat raw fruit before a dream; but ripe fruit was calculated to produce truthful visions. Fish was not esteemed proper food for such purposes; and Plutarch says that the head of a polypus was as disagreeable to the visionary sense as it was pleasant to that of the taste. It was essential, too, that the colour of the clothes in which the dreamer was wrapped should be white, if he desired to have clear, well-defined, and satisfactory visions; and, as has been already observed, the favourable time for their approach was either a little before or a little after daylight. It does not appear that it formed any part of their somniology, as of ours, for young people to put a piece of bride-cake under their

heads at night in order to dream of the person who was to be their future wife or husband ; though their extravagance in this department of divination went, in other respects, far beyond such modern practice.

It is necessary to state that with the view of accommodating the different kinds of dreams, they devised two separate passages for their approach ; the door of one being made of ivory, and that of the other of horn. Through the former passed all the false and deceitful visions, and through the latter the true and faithful ones ; the whole fraternity of dreams being thus arranged into two classes, like the virtues and vices of the moral code.

It was the general belief, with respect to the nature and birth of dreams, that they all proceeded from the earth : "the earth is the mother of dreams." And they traced the cause in this way—food springs from the earth ; sleep comes from food ; and from sleep proceed dreams. They were divided into several classes, according to the various circumstances by which they were surrounded ; but the grand divisions were two, namely, the *ἀλληγορικοί*, and *θεωρηματικοί*, the former were those which appeared under a disguise, that is, presented one appearance while they indicated another. For instance, suppose a person dreamt that one of his arms was made of gold ; such a dream was not to be taken as literally true, but as indicative of the coming of great wealth. The other division were those dreams which came without disguise, presenting themselves to the mind exactly as they were. Somnus, the god of sleep, was supposed to have three attendants, for the purpose of supplying him

with the dreams which he called for. These servants, whose names were Morpheus, Phobetor or Icolos, and Phantasos, had particular and distinct provinces assigned them. Morpheus was employed when the dream to be used was relating to men; Phobetor, or Icolos as he was denominated by the gods, was in attendance when the dream had reference to beasts; and Phantasos was called for when the vision was of inanimate things. It was usual, after a dream, for the person dreaming to go, after rising in the morning, to the goddess Vesta, or to one of the household gods, and inform them of it. Sometimes it was Apollo, or Jupiter, or some other of the principal gods, who was to be referred to in this way. It was also customary to offer up prayers in the morning, and to take a cold bath, with the view of averting any impending evil. This would seem to be the only rational part of the whole system, as it manifested a more philosophic idea of the cause and nature of dreams, than anything else to be found in their observances as connected with them.

CHAPTER LXVI.

The art of augury—the position of the augurs in the popular estimation—Comparison between ancient and modern superstitions.

THE art of divination among the ancients was especially divided into two branches; namely, that which was based on the flight of birds, and that which related to the inspection of the entrails of animals. The former, which is called augury, was practised very generally; and it is said that the people of Phrygia, of Arabia, and of Sicily, were distinguished for their superior skill in it. The Lacedemonians, too, made great use of it; and their kings always kept an augur in their service, for the purpose of being assisted by his counsel. Pliny says that this art was invented by one Car; whence the name Caria, a district in Asia Minor. Chalchas was a celebrated augur, and proved very useful to the Greeks at the Trojan war, by instructing them with respect to the will of the gods on several trying occasions; and by foretelling the length of time which would be expended by them before the Trojan walls. This he was enabled to tell by the number of sparrows killed in their nest by a serpent: the number was ten, and accordingly the war, he predicted, was to last ten

years. This great augur, or prophet, is reported to have died of grief after a contest of art with one Mopsus, another augur, who defeated him. The point contested between them is said to have been as to the number of figs on a certain fig-tree; which Chalchas was unable to tell, while Mopsus, by hitting on the exact number, won the victory. The dress or robe worn by the Greek augurs was white, while that of the Roman augurs was scarlet or purple. In observing the flight of birds the Greek augurs always looked towards the north; but the Roman towards the south; and thus the right side with the one, and the left with the other, was accounted the lucky side in the process of divination; it being, in fact, the east in both instances.

The unlucky birds were either those which did not fly, or which alighted in a lower position, or at a different point from what was usual. Also birds with long talons were accounted unlucky. Crows, doves, eagles, and owls, were the birds principally observed in the art of augury. It was believed that the augurs were capable of understanding the language of those birds; and that in order to obtain this faculty they had only to get themselves licked by a snake. Helenus and Cassandra, so celebrated in connexion with the Trojan war, are reported to have been thus qualified for the exercise of the prophetic art. But we find, notwithstanding the extent to which this absurdity or deception was carried by the ancients, that little or no credit was given to it by persons of strong minds and intelligence; for we find that Homer represents Hector as scouting one of

the augurs from him, and turning his pretensions into ridicule. The fact appears to have been that the ignorant and superstitious of those times, as of all times, even to the present day, gave encouragement to impostors of every description, by the weakness and credulity of their minds, which caused them to fall into every absurdity which was placed in their way, and more especially if it was connected in any way with supernatural phenomena and the agency of the gods. The very circumstances of their religious belief, the multiplicity of their gods, their constant acts and ceremonies of worship, and the universal network of superstition which encompassed them, exposed them to the assaults of every artful and designing impostor, and made them a safe and easy prey to his fraud and villany. This is the case even at the present day; and however surprised we may feel at the extreme folly and senselessness of some of the practices of the ancients, and however we may express our astonishment that a people so gifted and so illustrious for greatness of mind and extent of knowledge as were the ancient Greeks, should nevertheless exhibit such a low standard of sense and reason; yet, a little reflection will prove to us that our own practices and superstitions scarcely qualify us as judges in this matter. We need only look back a century or two to mark the strange features which Europe presented in its moral and intellectual phases; and though we are exempt to-day from the follies and absurdities connected with superstitious belief which disfigure those past periods in our history, yet we cannot boast, even at the present period

of almost universal enlightenment, an exemption from follies and weaknesses, absurdities and superstitious prejudices, as unreasonable and ludicrous as those which the pages of ancient Grecian history present to our contemplation. We do not employ the same imposing machinery of superstition which characterized the belief and practice of the ancients ; but we have our good and bad dreams, our omens, our symbols, our tokens, our lucky and unlucky days, our religious imaginings, our fantastic inspirations, our prophecies, our visible and invisible spirits, our rappings and apparitions ; in short, we are encompassed with a spiritual world as multifarious, if not as specious, as that of Greece in her best and palmiest days of superstition. And it would be impossible to write the history of the present age, or of any portion of it, without interweaving in every page the superstitious delusions which characterize its manners. But all this is independent of the high-wrought civilization which surrounds us ; as was the superstition of the ancients independent of the intellectual splendour in which they were invested.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Extispicina, or the art of foretelling future events by the inspection of the entrails of animals—Necromancy, hydromancy, lithomancy, and other modes of acquiring a knowledge of futurity.

THE second great branch of divination was that which was performed by the inspection of the entrails of beasts, called, *Extispicina* or *Aruspicina*, which was in most general use. Elis in Greece, and Caria in Asia Minor, were the principal places where it was cultivated.

Tiresias was one of the most celebrated proficient in this art, and it was believed that his great skill and knowledge in this department were communicated to him by Jupiter, in order to recompense him for the deprivation of his sight. The ceremony of divination by *Extispicina* was called *ἱεροσκοπία*, that is, the inspection of sacred things.

The whole business consisted in observing the motions, appearances, and circumstances attending the victim, when brought to the slaughter, and in attending to the form and appearance of the entrails, when exposed to view, but more especially of the liver. All those circumstances and appearances were called *σημεῖα*, or signs; and upon them was founded the knowledge of future events. If the animal to be

experimented upon exhibited an unwillingness to be brought to the slaughter, or if it broke the bonds and escaped by the way, or avoided the blow, or struggled against its fate, or refused to give its blood, or kept kicking and beating the ground for a long time—all these things were deemed unfavourable signs; while the contrary were looked upon as good omens. The animals anciently devoted to this purpose were sheep, calves and goats, and sometimes sows, and even dogs. The people of the island of Cyprus are reported to have employed sows, and the Jamidæ, dogs. When examining the liver, which was the chief object of inspection, they divided their examination into two parts: first, the concave part was examined for the purpose of obtaining information relative to themselves and their friends; and then the gibbous or convex part was examined for what concerned their enemies. If the parts appeared over dry, or that a ligature grew between them, or if there was no lobe, these were considered bad signs. The heart became the next object of examination. If this happened to be small, or if it palpitated much, the signs were unfavourable. But if fat appeared in any part of the entrails, or if plaits or foldings exhibited themselves, they were regarded as good signs. After this examination the victim was burnt, and the fire employed for this purpose was of a peculiar kind. At Athens it was lighted with a torch, which was kept always burning in the temple of Minerva, and attended by virgins devoted to the service, such as those called Vestal Virgins at Rome. At Delphos, where the Oracle was established, there were certain

officers called *πυρκυβοί*, whose business it was to superintend the burning of the victims; and those kept a fire constantly in readiness for the purpose, which was made of a peculiar kind of fuel, ignited by the sun's beams. This was the case in almost every place where those ceremonies were used. In Egypt they kept a fire of this kind which was called the *Seraphim*; and in Persia another called the *Orimasda*. While the victim was undergoing the process of burning, the flame arising from the fire became an object of particular attention and examination. If it spired upward without making a noise, the sign was regarded as favourable; as was also its continuing until the victim was consumed. Several other observances took place during the cremation, with the view of ascertaining what was favourable or otherwise; such as taking some of the pitch off the torches, and throwing it into the fire, and thereby establishing good omens from its rising up into one bright flame, or the contrary, if otherwise. They also took notice of the gall as it burned; and of the ashes, after the victim was consumed; and of the smoke, its colour, and smell; and drew omens, favourable or unfavourable, from all. They also threw frankincense and poppies into the flames in order to mark the appearances they should produce. Besides these species of divination, there were innumerable others; among the chief of which was that called *νεκρομαντεία*, or necromancy, which was performed through the instrumentality of dead bodies. The people of Thessaly were very expert at this mode of divination, using only some bone or artery of a dead body in their process; but

others made use of the whole body, and poured hot blood into it in order to recall its spirit, and obtain from it such information as they required. It was, however, essential to success in this latter speculation, that the party so questioning the deceased should have deserved well of him, otherwise no information whatever could be expected. When Periander, as Herodotus informs us, employed this ordeal in order to receive intelligence from his wife, Melissa, she refused answering him, because he had not treated her as he ought. Another species of divination was by water, and was called *ὕδρομαντεία*. There were several modes according to which this was effected; such as by drinking the water of a fountain, and thereby becoming moved with the spirit of prophecy; or by casting various things into the water, and watching whether they should sink or float, as in the well of Ino they were wont to throw in cakes. Again, by observing reflections or images in the water: the well of Apollo in Achaia was celebrated for this practice. The dipping of a glass in the water, and observing how a sick person was reflected in it, was another mode of this prophecy by water. It was also a common practice to throw three stones into the water, and to draw conclusions from the manner of their descent, observing the circles they made as they sank. In these experiments wine or oil was sometimes used instead of water. There was another mode of divination distinct from these, called *λίθομαντεία*, or divination by the loadstone, which was believed to speak like a child when washed in spring water. By this mode Helenus is reported to have foretold the

destruction of Troy. There was also a mystic art employed for the discovery of thieves, or of things stolen, which was called *κοσκινομαντεία*. This was effected by means of a sieve suspended by a thread, which was supposed to turn round at the mention of the name of the thief. There were various other modes of divination which it would be tedious as well as useless to dwell upon; such as those performed with Gyges' ring, with eggs, with barley, with a burning candle, and so on.

But besides the knowledge thus derived, or pretended to be derived, from the observation of animate and inanimate things, there was another kind of prophetic intimation drawn from words spoken, which were called *φήμαι*. These words or voices were sometimes heard in the air, as it was believed, and delivered in a supernatural way, and sometimes they were enunciated by men. *Pythagorei*, says Cicero, *non solum voces deorum observarunt, sed etiam hominum*; "The Pythagoreans observed not only the voices of gods, but also those of men." Words or speeches which boded evil were called *δυσφήμαι*, and these they were always solicitous to avoid, especially on occasions of sacrifice or religious ceremonies. For instance, instead of using the word *δεσμωτήριον*, a prison, on such occasions, they would use the word *οἶκημα*, a house; instead of *ἐριννύς*, the Furies, they would use *εὐμενίδες*, or *σεμναὶ θεαί*, the venerable goddesses; and so with other words of a similar character, which they called ill-omened words. Suetonius wrote a book on this subject, with the title of "De vocibus male ominatis," of ill-omened words.

In the commencement of any work or undertaking they were careful to make use of good words and expressions, as θεός, θεός, "the god, the god;" and ἔσταιμεν εὖ, "may we be well," or "may it be well with us." There were also certain words and names of persons, from which they drew good omens, when spoken before them; as when Julius said, *Mensas etiam consumimus*, "we have consumed the meal," as related by Virgil, the father of the youth immediately laid hold of the expression as a favourable omen; and one which indicated the termination of their labours. And we are told that Leotychides, when he asked a person from Samos to assist him against the Persians, and was told by this person that his name was Hegesistratus, said at once that he accepted the name as a good omen. When a bad omen in expression occurred, they were wont to retort it back upon the person who uttered it, with the words εἰς κεφαλὴν σοί, "let it fall back upon thine own head." A similar mode of denouncing evil was common to the Egyptians, and also to the Israelites. Sometimes when evil expressions of this sort happened to be used, when they were engaged at any work, they would alter the plan or style of the work, and commence to do it in another way, or they would begin it anew. In Euripides mention is made of a person who, hearing an ill-omened expression as he was in the act of drinking, dashed the liquor on the ground, and called for another cup. There were other omens observed among them, such as marks or moles on different parts of the body; palpitations of the heart, tremblings in the eyes, noise in the ears.

and such like. A noise in the right ear, or a tremor in the right eye, were accounted good omens; but occurring in the left ear and left eye, they were considered bad omens. There were books written also on these omens, such as that of Melampus, the celebrated interpreter of omens to Ptolemy Philadelphus.

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CHAPTER LXVIII.

Similarity of Grecian superstitions to those practised by the Irish—Whence arose this similarity?

BUT amid all these indications of the future, among these multifarious signs of the will of Fate, that of sneezing held a most important place. So much indeed did the ancient Greeks seem to rely upon it as a herald of good or evil, as an infallible monitor of coming events, that they elevated it to the position and dignity of a god. Hence it happened that it was forbidden to eat the brain of any animal, because they deemed it the seat and source of sneezing. Whenever any person chanced to sneeze, it was an invariable observance to say *Ζεὺς σῶσον*, "God bless us;" the great father of the gods, Jupiter himself, being thus appealed to for his divine interference to protect them against any approaching evil which might thus be indicated by the act of sternutation.

We cannot pass over this custom without observing upon the identity of feeling or of practice which, in this respect, as in many others, exists between the Irish, even at the present day, and the Greeks of antiquity. Any one who is at all familiar with the manners and customs of the Irish people, especially

the peasantry, must know that the act of sneezing is regarded by them with a superstitious feeling ; and the invocation, " God bless us," when one sneezes, is as common among them as *Ζεὺς σώσον*, was among the Greeks.

I dwell on this point, not from any importance that I attach to it *per se*, but to show the vitality of those superstitious practices that have descended to us from the most remote times ; and to indicate the wide-spreading and connecting chain of manners and customs by which people even the most remote in time and space are often found to be united together. Such similarity, or rather identity, in the manners and practices of two different nations, if it does not—and it is not necessary that it should—prove a common origin, at least shows an intercommunication, either direct or indirect, between them at a very remote period. But this is not the only instance which points to the existence of an intercourse between the Greeks and the Irish ; I have already glanced at others in the course of these observations ; and had I not felt that it would be inconsistent with the nature of the work in hand, I might have traced out in almost every department of Grecian customs and observances, particularly in that relating to religious and superstitious rites and ceremonies, such points of agreement with those of the ancient and modern Irish as could not fail to be both amusing and instructive. That the Irish retained their ancient customs and manners through every change of time and circumstance by which the rest of Europe had been affected, is known to every

student of Irish history ; and amid the crash of dynasties and empires which followed in the track of the Roman eagle, Ireland remained unscathed ; the structure of her social and religious systems therefore remained whole and entire throughout the period which saw the other nations of the civilized world bent to the influence of the Roman power, their manners changed, their customs modified, and their social polity and religious systems either swept away altogether, or so altered as to meet the necessities of the new civilization. If commercial or other intercourse had ever existed between the ancient Greeks and Irish, either directly or indirectly—and this is not the place to discuss so speculative a subject—then it is plain that any customs, or manners, or modes of speech which the Greeks introduced into Ireland must have taken undisturbed root in the soil, and propagated themselves throughout every age of its pagan history. They would thus have amalgamated with the social and religious principles which had existed in the land before their introduction, and so have continued through the course of time, advancing or veering with the general destinies of the nation.

When, at the commencement of the Christian period of her history, Ireland underwent the changes in manners and customs consequent upon the establishment of a new religious creed, it is certain that those changes were not such as to obliterate her former practices and superstitions ; on the contrary, the old manners and customs were to a certain extent retained, and made subservient to the necessities and

demands of the new creed, the motive and intention alone being changed. If the people were forbidden to say, "Jupiter bless us," or "Baal bless us," they were allowed and taught to say "God bless us." If they were not permitted to light their fires upon hill and mountain in honour of Grynæus Apollo, they were allowed to do so in commemoration of some event in their Christian history, as in honour of St. John.

Thus the practices and customs of the Christian religion were not calculated to uproot the mythology of the pagan which had occupied the ground before it ; that is, as to customs, superstitions, mystic rites, and such practices as interfered not with the truth and principles of the Christian faith. So far indeed was the Christian creed from producing such an effect, that it rather gave a scope to the vague and mystic ideas which floated around the domain of paganism ; for if gods and goddesses were abrogated, saints and angels were supplied in abundance, and the mind was as much wrapped in the mystic uncertainty and indefiniteness of the one as of the other.

The thoughts and sentiments were wafted in the same aërial boat, whether they turned to the vague and mist-covered shore where the deities of heathenism or paganism reared their cloud-capped temples, or to the equally undefined and impenetrable region where the Seraphim and the Cherubim poured song and incense around the throne of the Eternal One. Hence if the customs and manners of ancient Greece had ever, by any mode of communication, transferred

themselves, in part or in whole, to the shores of ancient Hibernia, *there* they were likely to remain and germinate; for no blast of revolution had ever swept over its fair surface; while the whirlwind of invasion and of national contention disturbed and unsettled, or laid desolate, every other portion of the then civilized world.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Superstitious observances in connexion with sneezing, the drawing of lots, and the accidental meeting with various kinds of animals on a journey.

To return to the superstitious practices of ancient Greece. We have seen that sneezing was looked upon by them as a prognostic of good or evil fortune. The time, and the side, such as left or right, were carefully observed with respect to the ominous import of sneezing. If a person happened to sneeze in the afternoon, it was regarded as a good sign ; but if in the morning, very bad. If one chanced to sneeze at table, when the things were being removed, it was a bad omen ; and so it was if a sneeze came from a person sitting at the left hand ; but if the person on the right hand chanced to sneeze, it was a good omen. Socrates, the most celebrated philosopher of Greece, had an unflinching faith in the divinity of sneezing, for he esteemed it as a sort of demon or guardian angel which accompanied men, and notified them of approaching good or evil. And Aristotle regarded the subject in so serious a light as to introduce its discussion into his works. A sneeze from the right-hand side was sufficient to raise the valour of soldiers in the battle-field ; as it was, when coming from the

left, to depress them. We read that, upon this principle, one Euphrantides encouraged the soldiers of Themistocles to fight, when he heard a sneeze on the right hand ; and that Xenophon was raised to the position of a general because a sneeze was heard on his right hand while he was making a speech. Several other instances are given in the Greek writings of the stress with which the act of sneezing was regarded in those ancient times.

In after-time, however, it lost a good deal of its superstitious importance, at least among the more enlightened classes ; for we find that Timotheus turned the thing into ridicule when he was reminded that one of his soldiers sneezed on the left, as he (Timotheus) was in the act of going on shipboard. The captain of the ship advised him not to go on board, as the omen was unlucky ; but Timotheus burst into a fit of laughter, exclaiming, "What omen can it be if among so many men one of them should sneeze ?" It is scarce necessary to observe that the Romans were also observers of this superstitious practice. We find Cicero mentioning it, among other observances of a similar character,—*Pedis offensio nobis, et corrigiæ abruptio, et sternutamenta erunt observanda*, "the tripping of the foot, the bursting of the shoe-tie, and sneezing must be noticed by us." Accidental occurrences at sacrifices and feasts, as well as in going abroad, and returning home, were also matters of superstitious observance among the ancient Greeks and Romans. A piece of a cake or of anything else offered in sacrifice was taken home by them for good luck. If in the course of the

sacrifice the priest let anything drop from his hand, it was regarded as a bad omen. At a feast it was looked upon as a lucky omen to crown the cup with a garland, because, as a Greek writer puts it, the circle, which the garland represented, is the most perfect of all figures, and is capable of containing the most of any figure of equal surface. The entrance of a strange black dog ; the spilling of wine by another while one was drinking ; the creaking of a table ; a sudden pause in the conversation while a person was in the act of drinking ; were all considered bad omens. In putting on the clothes at rising in the morning, care was taken that the right side should be first attended to ; for if it happened that the left leg or foot was first supplied with the stocking or shoe, it was looked upon as a bad omen. In going abroad they felt solicitous as to the sort of living things which crossed their way, for good or ill luck loomed ahead according to the character and nature of these things. Books were written even upon these ; and the events to be expected from their appearance were laid down in due form. If a hare crossed the traveller's path, or a snake lay in the way so as to cause fellow-travellers to divide and pass on either side, or if a female of the canine race with her whelps chanced to be on the road ; these were all evil sights, and prognosticated bad fortune.

He who happened to meet a black mare on his way, or a eunuch, or an ape, was bound to be immediately on his guard ; and, to avert the omened evil, he must take heed to stand off at a distance of *forty feet*. The weasel, too, was an ill-omened creature, and by all

means to be avoided in the way ; particularly if the person so encountered had business to the courts of justice ; for in that case he must wait for another day. There were even temples and altars for this purpose, which were consecrated to Apollo Spondius. At Thebes, there were altars erected for the purpose of divining by omens ; and at Smyrna there stood a temple for this purpose, where the person who applied whispered into the ear of the idol which was established for this object ; and then stopping up his own ears, in order to exclude all sounds while in the temple, he passed out ; and the first voice which he then heard was to be interpreted as that of the oracle. The casting or drawing of lots was also a very general practice among the Greeks ; not alone for purposes of superstition, but also in connexion with arrangements of a practical nature, such as is prevalent on various occasions at the present time. In courts of justice, as has been already seen, the lot or ballot was used in giving judgment ; and in the gymnastic exercises, where the persons engaged were to be matched, as in wrestling, lots were drawn for the purpose. Where several persons were condemned to death by process of law, and when the sentence was that they were to die on different days, lots were drawn to determine who was to die first, and who second, and so on ; it being considered an advantage to have the execution postponed, as it often happened that the judgment of the court was reversed, or rather a pardon granted. But lots, as connected with the operations of fate, were drawn generally in the temple. For this purpose there was a table kept in the temple, with lots or dice ; the

object of the ceremony being to ascertain whether any particular prophecy was to come to pass, or not. If any number, predetermined or agreed upon, should come up, then the prophecy was to be fulfilled ; but otherwise not. There were other lots which were unconnected with the temple, and might be drawn anywhere ; of these there was one kind which consisted of a number of slips of paper or wood, with different inscriptions ; he who drew one of these was to have some object in his mind at the same time, that is, he was to wish for something, or think of something which he was desirous should come to pass ; if then the inscription on the lot drawn corresponded with the thing thought of, it was accounted a sound prophecy, and the event was put down as a thing certain. The Egyptians are supposed to have been the originators of this species of divination.

CHAPTER LXX.

Paganism and Christianity—Conclusion.

CONSULTING the Fates through the medium of the poets was another form of prophetic inquiry common among the Greeks and Romans. This was done by opening one of the works of the poets, and choosing a verse at random ; which was to be interpreted in accordance with the relation which its meaning bore to the circumstances of the inquirer.

Of this description of divination was that called the Homeric lots among the Greeks, and the Virgilian lots among the Romans. Even in Christian times such a mode of prophesying was resorted to through the medium of the Bible. In our own day we know that turning the key in the Bible is very often practised.

However, those days of shadowy superstition may be said to have passed away ; and though we may still in hours of idle amusement revert to some of the mystic practices of other times, yet we are conscious of the futility which surrounds them ; and feel that we are guided by a truer and steadier light than that by whose uncertain and deceitful flickering the ancients were directed in their daily life. Our spirit, like theirs, wanders sometimes away in the regions

of the mysterious and the unknown ; but the mist of religious doubt and superstition which hung around their pathway, and obscured the lineaments of Truth, has been for us swept away by the glorious light of Revelation.

We no longer tremble, like our brethren of the olden time, on the precipice of a dark and wavering faith ; but move fearlessly on in the serene and radiant atmosphere of a creed which knows no power, no influence save that which flows direct from the Providence of God. But yet, as has been already observed, the aberrations of thought and feeling which marked the state and condition of antiquity still survive among us in all the old countries of Europe, as well as in those formed in recent times by the spirit of emigration.

It has been shown that the introduction of Christianity into Ireland had not the effect of eradicating those practices which had sprung from the institutions of paganism ; nor indeed did it particularly seek to do so ; its object being not so much the abolition of all pagan customs as of the system of belief upon which they were founded. The doctrines which constituted the system were abolished ; but the ritual observances and practices by which they were attended, and which constituted the daily life of the people, and were incorporated, as it were, with their very existence ; these were, in great part, permitted to be retained, but applied to the objects and purposes of the new system of faith.

And hence proceeds that remarkable similarity

which we find to exist between the superstitious customs and practices of ancient and modern times ; and particularly with reference, as it has been made a point to prove, to ancient Greece, and ancient as well as modern Ireland. At weddings, christenings, and funerals ; at sacrifices and public festivities ; at all those meetings and assemblies where the national characteristics of a people are moulded and exhibited, and their private manners brought prominently to view ; the customs, usages, and habits of the ancient Greeks bear a most striking similarity to those which, down to a comparatively recent date, and even in some cases down to the present time, have prevailed in Ireland.

The scope of this work does not admit of the introduction of matter connected with the modern history of Greece ; but yet it may be permitted to observe that recent events have shown that Europe is not forgetful of the debt which she owes to the nursing-mother of her early life. From ancient Greece, as from a living fountain, emanated all those arts and sciences which formed the basis of Europe's earliest civilization ; and whose influence must continue to be felt as long as the world lasts.

Of England it must, with honest pride, be said that she was not forgetful of the high duty which she, as well as the rest of the civilized world, owed to the memory of the glorious Old Land, when, in the hour of trial, she interposed her resistless arm between the modern kingdom of Greece and her semi-barbarous assailants ; and thus protected the rising liberties of the young nation. And there can be no room for doubt that

England will always use her power and prestige in promoting the extension and consolidation of a kingdom in whose advancement and prosperity the civilized world must ever feel a deep and lasting interest.

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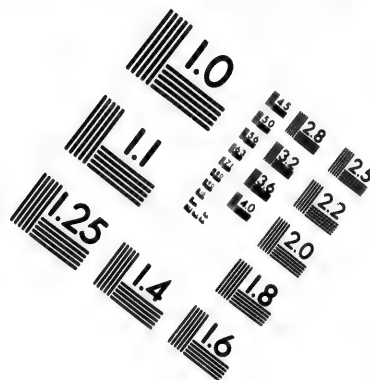
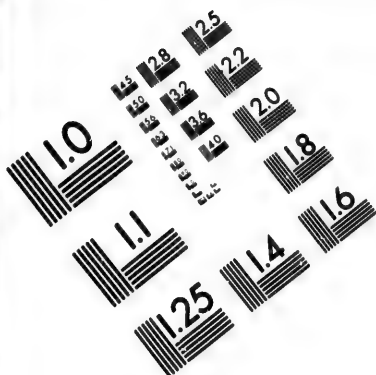
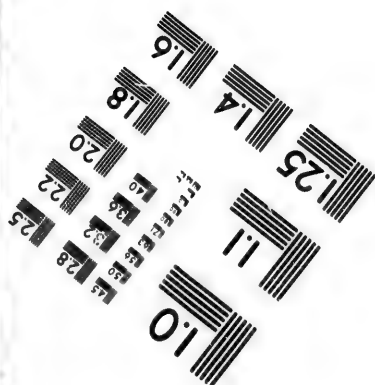
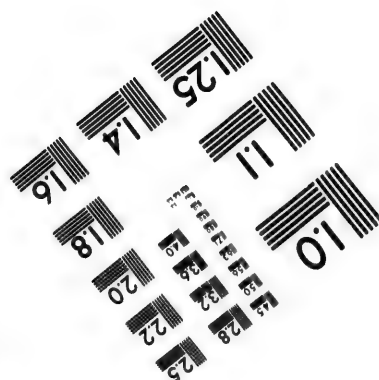
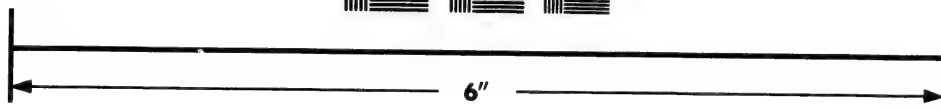
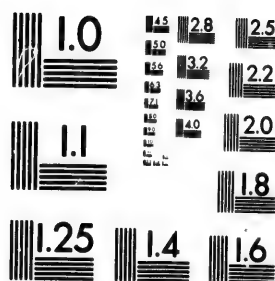


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